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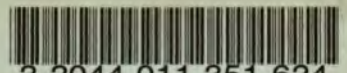
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# The Language Question in Greece.

FROM THE GREEK OF J. N. STICHMAN  
AND W. H. STICHMAN TRANSLATED  
INTO ENGLISH BY THE SAME  
AUTHORS.

It is the duty of every citizen to be  
informed of the state of his country,  
and to be able to express his views  
on the subject of the language question.

LONDON:—PRINTED BY THE AUTHOR, 1881.

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# The Language Question in Greece.

*THREE ESSAYS BY J. N. PSICHARI  
AND ONE BY H. PERNOT TRANSLATED  
INTO ENGLISH FROM THE FRENCH  
BY "CHIENSIS."*

Il est un amour qu'ils (les puristes) ne sont  
pas parvenus à arracher à l'âme de la Grèce ;  
c'est l'amour de la langue nationale.

*(Psichari—Essais de Grammaire historique  
néo-Grecque—Vol. II, p. XXI.)*

CALCUTTA :

PRINTED AT THE BAPTIST MISSION PRESS.

1902.

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*Keller*

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## Preface.

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THE interest, which the English public has shown about the Gospel riots that occurred in Athens towards the latter end of 1901, the able articles, which the English and the Anglo-Indian Press have published on that occasion<sup>1</sup> and the publication in England of works on Modern Greek, such as those of Mr. Jannaris<sup>2</sup> and Mr. Abbot<sup>3</sup>, justify, we think, the publication of this work. We hope that it may also interest the Indian reader, since a state of bi-linguism exists in this country also.

Modern Greek appears to interest other countries also. France and Germany not only possess a literature

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<sup>1</sup> See Appendix A.

<sup>2</sup> An Historical Greek Grammar, chiefly of the Attic dialect as written and spoken from classical Antiquity down to the present time, founded upon the Ancient Texts, Inscriptions, Papyri and present popular Greek by A.D. Jannaris, Ph.D., Lecturer on Post-Classical and Modern Greek at the University of St. Andrews, author of an "Ancient Greek Lexicon for Greeks," "A Modern Greek and English Dictionary," "A Modern Greek Grammar for Germans," etc., etc., London. MacMillan and Co., 1897.

<sup>3</sup> Songs of Modern Greece, with introductions, translations and notes by G. F. Abbott, B.A., Cambridge, at the University Press, 1900.

*N.B.*—It has been suggested to us by an eminent Professor of Oxford to draw up a list of all the articles and books, which have been published in English on Modern Greek, since the beginning of last Century. Unfortunately, with the materials in hand in this country, we found it impossible to carry out this valuable suggestion.

devoted to it, but actually have special Chairs for Spoken Modern Greek in their Universities. In Paris, Mr. Psichari lectures on it at the "Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes," and Mr. Legrand,<sup>1</sup> assisted by Mr. Hubert Pernot,<sup>2</sup> teaches it at the "Ecole Nationale des Langues Orientales Vivantes." In Munich, Mr. Krumbacher has a Chair in the University and edits an important periodical; which deals extensively with Mediæval and Modern Greek.

The four essays, which we have translated into English from the French, present, in our opinion, the question clearly and in its true light and have been disposed in such a way, so as to enable the reader to follow it from the very beginning to its latest phase—the unfortunate Gospel riots in Athens. We thought it necessary, however, to premise them with a short notice dealing chiefly with the work done by Mr. Psichari, who can justly be considered as the head of the so called *vulgarist* movement in Greece and

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<sup>1</sup> Mr. Legrand, besides numerous valuable editions of mediæval Greek Texts, a Bibliography of all Greek authors from the XV to the XVII century, and an excellent Greek-French and French-Greek Dictionary, has edited, with Mr. Pernot, a Modern Greek Chrestomathy the best and most complete of its kind.

<sup>2</sup> Born in 1870, in the Franche-Comté, Mr. Pernot has visited Greece for the first time in 1887. In 1889, he studied specially Modern Greek under Mr. Psichari and Mr. Legrand; he visited Greece again in 1889 and several times since. In 1895, he was appointed a lecturer (*répétiteur*) at the "Ecole Nationale des Langues Orientales Vivantes." Besides some important linguistic studies on Modern Greek dialects, specially the Tzaconian, Mr. Pernot has published, in 1897, a most excellent Modern Greek Grammar, of which we have translated for this book the Introductory Notice, under the heading "Ancient and Modern Greek."

who, by his works and his efforts, has given a new impetus, since the last decade, to this linguistic question, which is of the most vital importance to the country and which unfortunately remains unsettled for many a century up to the present day.

The few notes, which we have added to the text, are marked N.T. (note of the translator.)

*Calcutta, June 1902.*

CHIENSIS.





## Introductory Notice.

### SPOKEN MODERN GREEK.<sup>1</sup>

#### I.

In all unsettled questions misnomers play a great part and they are, so to say, the pivots, on which discussions seem to revolve for ever. To avoid such a misunderstanding, we would premise this short notice by calling the Greek, with which we

<sup>1</sup> The above has already appeared in a pamphlet form in Karachi, during November 1901. A few modifications and additions were since considered necessary. The following books may be consulted in connection with this subject.—

JEAN PSICHARI.—Questions d'histoire et de linguistique. Extrait du supplément du 18e volume de l'Annuaire du Syllogue littéraire Grec de Constantinople 1888. 4° p. 441.—497.

JEAN PSICHARI.—Essais de grammaire historique néo-grecque. L'article féminin pluriel au moyen âge et de nos jours et la première déclinaison moderne. Première partie; Paris 1886; 8° XXIII.—299.

JEAN PSICHARI.—Essais de grammaire historique néo-grecque, Etudes sur la langue médiévale. Paris 1889; 8° CLX.—336.

PSICHARI.—Τὸ Ταξίδι μου. Athens 1888, 12° 8'. 270.

Etudes de Philologie Néo-grecque. Recherches sur le développement historique du Grec, publiées par Jean Psichari. Paris 1892; CCXI,—377.

JEAN PSICHARI.—Autour de la Grèce. Ouvrage couronné par l'Académie Française, Paris 1897; in 12° XXIV.—352. |

PSICHARI.—Ὁ Σύλλογος πρὸς διδάσκειν ὠφελίμων βιβλίων. Athens 1900; in 12° 53.

Τὸ Ταξίδι τοῦ Ψυχάρη.—By E. D. Roïdis. Athens 1888; in 12° 61.

Τὰ Ἑθνωλ.—A linguistic study. By E. D. Roïdis. Athens 1893; in 12°

We are well acquainted with the works in Greek of Professor G. Chatzidakis. We regret, however, to be unable to follow him in his conclusions on this language question in Greece, as, in our humble opinion,

shall deal, "spoken." It is generally called "popular" or "vulgar"; both these denominations, however, do not, we think, convey to the mind a true meaning and cloud the question at issue. It is absurd to call the language, which is spoken even by the most educated classes of Greece, when they do not observe themselves, "popular," and unjust to call it "vulgar," when we know that, in its present form, it is but the normal evolution of the so revered ancient Greek.

At about the XII century, the present modern Greek makes its appearance.<sup>1</sup> It has already evolved from the ancient language and merged into the *κοινή* of the Gospels and will, henceforth, be divided into two forms: the "*purist*" Greek, which was affected by learned Greek scholars, dreaming of a revival of by-gone literary splendour and believing that the restitution of ancient forms would accomplish the miracle; and the so-called "*vulgar*" Greek, in which poems and chronicles were written, which, although they cannot perhaps be considered as works of art, are, at least, enlivened by the breath of life and remain interesting monuments of contemporary life and thought and are invaluable

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we consider them, on the whole, contradictory and devoid of any practical aim. One of his great arguments is that the present linguistic state of Greece is due to historical reasons and that consequently it ought to be tolerated and accepted. Such a logic appears to us very peculiar, indeed. Most national failings have more or less historical reasons. Are we to persist in them and not try to improve matters, although we may be convinced that they are wrong, simply because they are historical? Also, as former undergraduates of the Athenian University, of which Mr. Chatzidakis is one of the most distinguished Professors, we were grieved to see him use in a recent article against the "vulgarists" such language as the following: "to follow any more 'their (the vulgarists') opinion is a shame and denotes a complete 'want of common sense and self-respect; since they cannot be properly punished by the law, the only thing left to all Greeks is to 'despise them and to hold them in abhorrence.'" See the Athenian newspaper *Asty* of the 27th February, 1902.

<sup>1</sup> Psichari—*Etudes de Philologie Néo-Grecque*, p. XIV.

linguistic documents. Such a division appears to have existed in almost all the languages of civilized Europe; it has, however, disappeared elsewhere much sooner and with more ease, as these languages were not hampered by an antiquity and a dazzling splendour equal to ancient Greek. In Greece, however, such a division continued for centuries and, unfortunately, still continues to exist to the general detriment of the national character and its literature from both an artistic and a practical point of view. Modern Greeks, even up to the present day, speak one language and write another. And this not only as regards vocabulary, but also as regards grammatical forms and phonology.

— The Modern Greek will say ψωμί for *bread*, νερό for *water*, ἄλογο for *horse*, and γάδρος for *donkey*, and would be laughed at as a pedant, even in the most educated Athenian circles, if he ventured to use the antique equivalents ἄρτος, ὕδωρ, ἵππος, ὄνος. Still in his correspondence, in the newspaper, in the most simple books—even the school primers—he will calmly use the antique vocabulary.

As regards modern grammatical forms, which, far from being corrupted, as it was formerly believed by the great majority and attributed, in many instances, to foreign influences, have, on the contrary, gained in simplicity and logic, the same thing happens. Such forms as τὸ χέρι, τοῦ χειροῦ (*the hand, of the hand*), ὁ πολίτης τοῦ πολίτη (*the citizen, of the citizen*) will be used by the Greek in his every day talk, whilst he will, when writing or speaking in public, affect the ancient forms ἡ χεῖρ, τῆς χειρός, ὁ πολίτης, τοῦ πολίτου, little thinking that his ancestor, the Attic author, whom he so much reveres and admires, did not use the then antiquated forms ὁ πολίτας, τοῦ πολίταο, but simply wrote his masterpieces in the forms current in the Agora, ὁ πολίτης, τοῦ πολίτου.<sup>1</sup> Prejudice is so strong in the human mind, that the modern Greek fails to realize that the evolution of the Attic form τοῦ πολίτου,

<sup>1</sup> Psichari Quest. d' Hist. et de Ling. pp. 447-448. Also, Psichari, Ὁ Σύλλογος, etc., p. 26.

into the actual one τοῦ πολλῆς, is a further improvement and not a corruption.

The same phenomenon occurs in the phonetic rules of the language. Few, nowadays, will persist in the idea that the pronunciation of modern Greek is identical to that of the ancient, for such an assertion would simply imply that Greeks are a dead race and that their mental activity has been stagnant during all these past centuries.<sup>1</sup> A close study of the true modern pronunciation, viz., of the actually spoken modern Greek—not of the artificial one taught in schools—will soon convince us that, in this respect also, Greek has made great strides towards euphony and velocity in enunciation. The Greek, when not observing himself, will unfailingly say τὸν ἄνθρωπο instead of τὸν ἄνθρωπον; τὸ καλὸ παιδί instead of τὸ καλὸν παιδίον; ὁ γιατρός instead of ὁ ἱατρός, etc.

The unknown authors of the Greek folklore, so much studied and admired by Fauriel, Passow, Ellisen and Goethe; the Cretan poets of Erotocritos and Erofile; Vilaras, Ali Pacha's doctor in Janina of Epirus, the author of delightful poems and original essays on this linguistic question;<sup>2</sup> Solomos, the immortal bard of our National Hymn; Valaority, the poet of the Klephts, as Mr. Rennell Rodd calls him, in an excellent article, published in July 1891 in the *Nineteenth Century*, and many others have written in this "spoken" Greek. They are, perhaps, a minority, when compared to the authors of "purist" or "written" Greek; but, after all, quality comes always before quantity.

At the beginning of the XIX century, the latent antagonism between these two forms came to a crisis. With the fermenting revival of the nation, which preceded the Greek War of Independence (1821-8), the question, as to what language was to be adopted by the nation, came to the front. A great deal was written,

<sup>1</sup> Psichari.—Autour de la Grèce, pp. 173-224.

<sup>2</sup> Henry Holland in his *Travels in the Ionian Islands, Albania, Thessaly, Macedonia during the years 1812 and 1813* speaks highly of Vilaras as a broad mind, well versed in metaphysics.

not always couched in courteous terms, by the partisans of the two opposite camps; pamphlets were published by educated Greeks in Vienna, Amsterdam, Bucharest. The latter place was then one of the most flourishing centres of Greek scholars; it was the capital of Moldo-Valachia, which, being under the Turks, was generally governed by that enlightened class of Greeks, known in history as "Phanariots"; Greek was flourishing in the Danubian Provinces; it was the language of the Court, and Bucharest was renowned for its Hellenic schools and its Greek scholars. In fact, Roumanians and Bulgarians who, unfortunately, are, at present, amongst the bitterest enemies of Hellenism,<sup>1</sup> were proud, at that time, of being brought up as Greeks and called themselves "Roumi" the equivalent of *Romioi*, the name under which modern Greeks were then universally known.

The Greek War of Independence, which broke out in 1821 and lasted seven whole years, put temporarily a stop to these quarrels. Coray, a Greek from Chios, a great patriot, a great *savant* and an Hellenist, residing in Paris, proposed and supported, unfortunately, "half way" measures as the solution of such a vital problem; one of them, for instance, was the adoption of ancient morphology in words of every day use, transformed through the course of centuries, such as *ὁμῆριον* instead of *μάρι*, *ὁμῆρια* instead of *μάρι*<sub>sp</sub>. As usual, this eventually proved nefarious. It settled or rather mended matters temporarily and, up to the present moment, the question still remains open.<sup>2</sup>

The Church and most of the Greek scholars were naturally for "purist" Greek. Their opinions gained ground amongst the Chiefs of the Revolution, many of whom, being more or less men of hardly any literary education, were influenced by their scribes

<sup>1</sup> A *rapprochement* has taken place lately between Greece and Roumania. Will it be durable, however?—It also appears that the new Patriarch of Constantinople is thinking of bringing about a union between his Church and that of Bulgaria.

<sup>2</sup> Psichari—*Quest. d' Hist. et de Ling.* pp. 470-471.—*Essais* 1. p. 210.

and dazzled by the *faux clinquant* of the purist form, which thus became the official written language, the language of schools and parliamentary debates, of the Pulpit and the University.

The evil of such a state of things is obvious. Optical and acoustical illusions come into play and perplex the question. Both forms, the "vulgar" and the "purist," or rather the "spoken" and the "written," are thus rendered useless from an artistic and a literary point of view. To hear the "purist" language on the stage, except, perhaps, in old-fashioned rhetoric dramas, is unbearable, even to an ordinary audience. Such form is naturally inappropriate to familiar correspondence, to the interchange of thoughts and feelings between persons united by ties of love and affection. It drags with itself a pompousness destructive of all delicate sentiments and emotions.

On the contrary, to see "spoken" Greek written jars on the nerves and shocks the eye of the majority. Such a feeling is, in this case, more intense, because, owing to the erroneous notions of the evolution of modern Greek and a pedantic tradition, the system of reading differently to what is written is not adopted amongst the Greeks. In English, for instance, children are taught to pronounce as "keur'nel" what is written as "colonel." But the modern Greek boy will be taught to consider the pronunciation *endeka* (eleven), which is the true one, as "vulgar" and made to read it as *entheka*,<sup>1</sup> a pronunciation which never existed at any time.<sup>2</sup>

From a practical point of view, this scission of the language into "written" and "spoken" appears to be doing not a little harm. People, so prolix in journalism and article writing as modern Greeks, are peculiarly reluctant to entrust matters of every day's occurrence to correspondence. Amongst the best classes in Athens, messages are sent round by word of mouth and servants carrying verbal messages are employed, where a written note

<sup>1</sup> The *th* as in the English article "the"

<sup>2</sup> Psichari—Quest. d' Hist. et de Ling. p. 450.

would be such a much more practical and safe mode of conveyance. Young Greeks spend two hours a day, in their schools and colleges, to study ancient Greek, not with a view of reading fluently and of appreciating, after their school life, their ancestors' immortal works, but in order to learn how to write "purist" Greek, which is no better than "dog-latin." I know many, young Greeks, diligent and clever, the first of their class, who, can hardly hold their own, as far as knowledge of ancient Greek is concerned, with English boys of public schools and French of *Lycées*.<sup>1</sup>

## II.

Against such a state of things protests have occasionally appeared ; but, although emanating from men, highly gifted and of an eminent literary culture, they have been drowned in the streams of pedantry, which went as far as propagating, in the schools, the idea that the language of modern Greeks would gradually become that of Xenophon or Isocrates and which, in poetical competitions, entirely precluded "spoken" Greek. Such men were, amongst others, Mr. Bernardakis, a learned scholar and a poet, and Mr. Roïdis, who can be classed among the few best writers in "purist" Modern Greek. These two men, however, whilst excluding from their writings some unbearable pedantic forms and whilst proclaiming that the written language of their countrymen should, as is the case with all civilized nations, be the same as the "spoken" one, seemed to hesitate about putting such sound theories into practice. The former evidently thinks that it is too late to remedy the evil ; the latter is of opinion, and this he developed in his "Idols," as we shall see later on, that the evil could only be gradually remedied by throwing away by degrees

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<sup>1</sup> Mr. G. Sotiriades, a distinguished Byzantinologist and archaeologist, has stated this recently in his address to the Association of School Masters in Athens. See the Athenian newspaper *The Asty*, 23rd September 1901.



all the ancient forms introduced in the "written" language, such as the future tense, the dative case, the infinitive, the reduplication, and so on. He considers that such an effort, if systematically pursued, will end by purging the "written" language of all the purist forms and tend to make it approach the "spoken" one to such an extent, that there will hardly be any palpable difference between the two. His theory appears plausible, and one has only to see what has been done in the wrong direction, during the last three quarters of the XIX century, and compare the "written" Greek of the beginning of that century to that of the early Seventies, in order to infer that such a solution might be also possible, when applied in the right direction.

Still such mild remedies were not sufficient. A revolution was necessary, an explosion imperative. The misconceived ideas about the nobility of ancient Greek, the perhaps fascinating theory of some that Ancient Greek was marble and Modern mud and that it was impossible to build up beautiful monuments from such a material as the latter, ought to be sapped from its very foundation. It was necessary to show that the language is a material of one kind only and that it depends on the architect to build a beautiful palace or an ugly house; that such ideas, as that of a language being, owing to its own nature, weak or poor, are entirely devoid of any sense. As regards the latter theory, we have a proof of its fallacy in what happened in France. As long as the French of the XIX Century stuck to their XVIII Century traditions, they produced poor poetry and poorer tragedies. Victor Hugo came, and, throwing over all preconceived ideas and notions about the nobility of words, showed that the French language could not be tied up like a mummy to such an extent as to consider words like "*mouchoir*" and "*lion*"<sup>1</sup> as vilifying a

<sup>1</sup> It is well-known that Mlle Mars, the great tragedian, refused to say the beautiful verse, which Doña Sol addresses to her royal lover, in "Hernani":

"Vous êtes mon lion superbe et généreux."

See also Psichari's *Tò Tafti mou*, pp. 29-32.

verse; and, by breaking with all such traditions, he proved the richness and vigour of which that language was capable.

It was necessary to throw a bomb amongst the pedantic edifices of modern Greece and such a bomb was thrown by Mr. Psichari in 1888 in the shape of a beautiful book called *Tò Taftidi mou* (my journey).

### III.

Strictly speaking, Mr. Psichari was unknown up to that time to the general public in Greece. A Greek by birth,<sup>1</sup> he studied in France and Germany and, after taking his degree (*agrégé de l' Université*) in Paris with great distinction, he was appointed, in 1884, as Professor of Byzantine and Neo-Grecian studies at the "Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes," (a branch of the Sorbonne of Paris), of which he is at present one of the Directors. He was known to scholars and to a limited Parisian public by his publications, *viz.*, an edition of Terence's *Adelphi*, an essay in the *Revue Nouvelle* of 1884 on "Science and the new destinies of Poetry" and his essays on "Historical Neo-Grecian Grammar"<sup>2</sup>, as well as by sundry other linguistic and historical essays, published chiefly in the *Revue Critique* of Paris. In his Grammar, he demonstrated, in a vigorous and convincing style, that the Greek, which is actually spoken, the so-called "vulgar" Greek, was none but the normal,

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Psichari comes from a distinguished family of Chios. His grand-father, a man of great wealth, was highly esteemed in Constantinople, where he used, on many occasions, his influence over the Sultan for the benefit of his countrymen. His father also was an influential member of the Greek Community of Constantinople and occupied several important posts at the Patriarchate. Mr. Psichari was born in Odessa in 1854 and, very young went over, to Constantinople, where he spent his childhood days. When at College in Paris, he continued studying "purist" Modern Greek with a Greek professor.

<sup>2</sup> The first volume of these Essays appeared in 1886 and the second in 1889.

natural and rational evolution of ancient Greek, both as regards morphology and phonology; that the few foreign words, found in the common (κοινή) language, (not the dialects, where the proportion varies according to former foreign dominion and is larger specially amongst certain classes, who intermingled, to a greater extent, with the conquerors) were after all natural to all other languages and that it is the "*typicon*" or form of the word and not the root that makes a word national or foreign. This valuable book was passed almost unnoticed in Greece, with the exception of some unworthy criticisms, which, however, did not appear to interest the general public. In 1886, he was sent by the Minister of Public Instruction of France to Constantinople as the French Delegate at the Greek Literary Syllogos, a learned and important body of that town, which were holding a Congress on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of their existence. This anniversary has not, for various reasons, taken place, but the papers and addresses, which were to be read on the occasion by the various delegates, were published in book form. Mr. Psichari's paper, occupying 50 pages in quarto, is written in the "spoken" Greek in all its purity and bears the title of "Historical and linguistic questions." It presents the question in a style brilliant and of a poetical breath, for in Mr. Psichari the *savant* does not exclude the poet and the stylist. In the article mentioned above as having appeared in the *Nouvelle Revue* of 1884, he has already shown those qualities, when, in an ingenious manner, he demonstrated that scientific truths could be utilized in poetry, just as myths and legends are, and that, as he said elsewhere,<sup>1</sup> "the most brilliant fictions will never equal the splendour of realities."

In 1888, he published the book that was to make him famous all over Greece and to mark an era in this question. This book was "My Journey." The journey he made in 1886 to Constantinople, Chios and Athens, was the pretext of a learned, humorous and poetical work, sparkling with wit and full of sarcasm and

<sup>1</sup> Psichari, *Essais* I., p. 288.

pathos. Next to observations artistic and poetical and full of true patriotic feelings about Greek life and soul, next to sarcastic remarks about the failings of the race and the pedantry of a large majority in this vital question of language, the modern ideas about the progress and evolution of the language, the latest deductions of science, as regards the morphology and the phonology of modern Greek, are skilfully introduced and cleverly developed. The language, in which the book is written, is the "spoken" one, and the unity of forms and phonetic rules are marvellously kept throughout its pages. Some daring innovations, as regards spelling, were introduced, although strictly in accordance with the rules, which Mr. Psichari had already laid down in his scientific books, the results of many years' study and profound linguistic researches. Such innovations were, for instance, the spelling of the diphthongs *av*, *ev*, according to their phonetic value, *viz.*, *αφ*, *εφ*, *αβ*, *εβ* which, besides simplifying spelling considerably, show with more ease and regularity the evolution of such an ancient form as *εὕρισκω* (*I find*) into its modern aspect *βρίσκω*, or the writing, according to modern phonology, of ancient names, *viz.*, *Αἰσχύλος*, for *Αἰοχύλος*, *Μέναντρος* for *Μένανδρος*, etc., etc.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This system which, whilst adhering still largely to historical spelling, tries to be more rational than heretofore, is briefly summarized as follows by Mr. Psichari in his *Quest. d' Hist. et de Ling.*, p. 451. We may add that the Italian language has adopted such logical simplifications :—

.....I kept to the conventional spelling, which is that of ancient Greek. This is followed by everybody and it would have been dangerous to have acted otherwise. Further, I write with an *η* and not with an *ι* : the word *ἡ πόλις* (the town) since the grammar of ancient Greek does not give us any such examples : *πόλις* is declined on *κεφαλῇ*, and consequently should be written in a similar manner. As regards the spelling of the forms of the declension of the article and of substantive nouns, I refer the reader to my "*Essais de Grammaire Historique Néo-Grecque*." There is not in the Attic dialect and consequently in the ancient *κοινή*, which, in such a case, are the only models that we should

Besides its solid substance, this book is also a marvel of artistic beauty. Even prosody, which, owing to the varied accentuation of Greek, renders the language so musical, was treated in such a masterly manner, as to render some of its pages pure harmony.

The qualities of the book and its daring innovations did not fail to make a great stir amongst the Greeks. Few, very few unfortunately, took it up and appreciated it seriously and to its full value. Some, whilst acknowledging its eminent qualities, made great reserves as regards the language. The majority of writers in newspapers and reviews and the great public in general, after reading, I am afraid, a few pages only, held it up to ridicule. All the usual stock phrases came to the front. It was, they said, impossible to adopt the language of the uneducated and to make of it a literary and scientific organ; a crime to destroy the work done by past generations, who endeavoured to purify the

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follow, any such plural accusative as *τιμαῖς* (honours). There are the plural nominatives *λαμπάδες*, *μητέρες*, etc.; consequently, as this desinence is the only starting point of such forms, we should, in conformity with the ancient spelling, write them with an *ε* and not with an *αι*. The same applies to the fem. plur. *οἶ* and to the fem. acc. plur. *τίς*. The prevailing spelling is a pure barbarism and as such, should be avoided. I have taken the liberty of making only one innovation, *viz.*, I write *αφ*, *εφ*, *αβ*, *εβ* instead of *αν* *ευ*. It is impossible to write *ἐρίσκω* for *βρίσκω*. But, the moment we admit *β* for *υ*, it is more logical to analyze everywhere the ancient diphthongue in a similar manner. Such a spelling has also the advantage of presenting to us the true modern pronunciation, without anything conventional. I know that, by adhering to the ancient spelling, we fall into a sea of contradictions, but it is difficult, if not impracticable, to abandon it. Naturally, where modern spelling is established, we have but to adopt it, especially when it indicates characteristic differences. We cannot but write, as it is done by everybody, and as I thought that I should also do, *φτάνει* (arrives) *άντρας* (man), *πεθερός* (father-in-law), *κόμπος* (knot), *σεκτούκι* (trunk), *πουλῶ* (I sell), *μπάινω* (I enter), etc.

language, and to throw it back to the times, when the nation was under foreign dominion, and so on.

One paper only, the Athenian *Acropolis*, took up its defence and published daily extracts from it. One brilliant author, Mr. Roïdis, wrote a masterly essay on it and, in his usual vigorous and conclusive style, proved the correctness of Mr. Psichari's theories. Ten years ago, the same author gave a blow to the purist poets, proved to what extent their poetry was mere rhetoric and held that the only true poets Greece has ever had since Solomos, were Valaority and, to a certain extent, Paraschos, because, besides their poetical talents, their poetry was natural and not artificial and was written in the true language of the nation, viz., "spoken" Greek. A great stir was made at the time, strong remonstrations took place, but truth had its way. The modern generation of poets has since begun to write in the "spoken" idiom, and, eschewing all rhetoric, approached to genuine poetry by being more true to life, more natural, more human. Some of them, who had hitherto been successful in their "purist" poetry, like Provelengios and Drossinis, were so sincere in their conversion, that they have never since written a single verse in the purist tongue. The essay of Mr. Roïdis on Mr. Psichari's book was widely read, convinced many people and induced them to overcome their childish aversion of being unable to read a language, which they were accustomed, up to then, to hear spoken only. Truth was going to have its way once more.

#### IV.

A decade has since passed away. In the meantime, Mr. Psichari was indefatigable. Whilst continuing his linguistic and historical lectures on Byzantine and Modern Greek at the "Ecole des Hautes Etudes" in Paris, he did not cease writing books and contributing articles to the Greek and French reviews and newspapers. He wrote a short story in Greek called "Jealousy," which

was published in 1891, in the then leading literary organ the *Hestia*, which was under the management of Drossinis, the delicate poet already mentioned. "Jealousy" is a masterpiece of pathos and lyricism. It was, later on, published in French with a novel by the same author, called "Cadeau de nocés", which was dealing with the deep lyricism, modern Greeks bring in their love affections.

Mr. Psichari visited Greece again in 1893. He went round the Islands and to Thessaly, studying the various dialects, the character of the people and, to use a modern French expression, the *Greek soul*. He published his impressions in one of the leading Athenian newspapers—the *Asty*—in the form of letters, which were beautiful poems in prose. The *Asty*, we may here add, under its enlightened editor, Mr. Kaklamanos, a young man of refined culture and noble mind, had, at about that time, adopted Mr. Psichari's cause and remained faithful to it ever since.<sup>1</sup>

On returning from his rambles, Mr. Psichari, gave a lecture at one of the most fashionable and highly-esteemed literary associations of Athens, the 'Parnassus.' His lecture was on 'Kiss.' It dealt with the history of the 'kiss' from the Antiquity down to the present day and showed how, in its evolution, the modern kiss was by far superior to the ancient, in refinement, purity and ardour. He displayed all his profound knowledge of ancient, mediaeval and modern Greek, covering it with gems of poetry and wit. The success of the lecture was great. Royalty and all that Athens has brilliant in art, letters, science and politics, were present.

A curious phenomenon was then produced, although easily explicable to a thoughtful and sound thinking mind. The greater part of the audience went away under the impression that Mr.

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<sup>1</sup> After the Gospel riots, Mr. Kaklamanos, disagreeing with the Proprietor of the *Asty* as to the course, which the newspaper were to follow, left it and founded the *Neon Asty*. The old *Asty* is at present an anti-vulgarist paper.

Psichari did not speak as *vulgarily* as he wrote and were seriously convinced that the language he used was the one employed by every body in colloquial conversation. This delusion was after all natural. To hear the language spoken did not shock their acoustic nerves, accustomed to it by an every day's use, as it did the optic ones, when the eye saw it in print. Still, what is certain is that Mr. Psichari did not make the slightest concession, and that the 'kiss' was written in precisely the same grammar and the same vocabulary as "Τὸ Ταῦτι μόν."

Mr. Psichari has continued all along his work with unabated activity. He published a book, the "Etudes de Philologie Néo-Grecque," containing, besides an admirable introduction on Byzantine and Modern Greek and on the studies pursued in this connection in Paris at the "Ecole des Hautes Etudes," various essays by his pupils, all written at his suggestion and under his supervision. Besides a long and beautiful novel, published both in Greek and French, "Yanniri's Dream," he has also written since two novels in French "La Croyante" and "L'Épreuve" and various articles and letters in the French newspapers and the *Asty*. The Dreyfus case did not leave indifferent a generous and active mind like his and the two novels, just mentioned, belong to his action during that period. But it is not within the limits of this notice to write about what he did in that direction.

He still continues his noble work and his efforts in furthering the cause of the "spoken" national Greek in our country. In his large and beautiful library—once the studio of his wife's maternal grandfather, Ary Scheffer—in the quiet and artistic *hôtel* of the Rue Chaptal, in Paris, where he lives with his charming family, under Bonnat's famous portrait of his father-in-law—the immortal Renan—he prepares his lectures for the Ecole des Hautes Etudes and writes his Greek and French books. He keeps up an extensive correspondence with many Greek authors, who are his disciples and firmly believes that truth will ultimately triumph and that, in less than half a century, Greece will be freed from this pedantic 'purist' language, which prevents the



spread of true education and knowledge and is a stumbling block to artistic and literary productions and their propagation amongst the masses.

## V.

In the summer of 1900, he published a series of five articles in the *Asty* about the "Association for the Propagation of useful Books amongst the People." This Association, founded, a year ago, with such a laudable aim, has adopted, strange to say, the "purist" idiom for its books. Whilst there is such a vast field for work in this direction, *viz.*, the enlightening and spread of true education amongst the people, most—if not all—efforts, unfortunately, do not appear to end the right way and the governing classes are almost always attracted by what looks brilliant rather than by what would be really sound and wholesome. It is a pity that the rich Greeks, who have, year after year, been leaving their millions to the nation, leave them, generally speaking, for works and institutions, for which a young nation, like Greece, has, for the present at least, no real need. Instead, for instance, of founding all over Greece primary-schools well-lighted and well-ventilated, with their walls adorned with reproductions of some of the antique master-pieces, or pictures representing illustrious episodes of the Byzantine era or the Greek Independence War of 1821 and portraits of the persons, who distinguished themselves in those glorious periods of our national history, and providing such schools with maps, elementary instruments of physics and chemistry, and fields for national games and gymnasia, a, no doubt well-meaning, patriot, has preferred to spend his millions in restoring the Stadion in Athens. Another, built the Academy in Athens, a beautiful building but hardly serving any purpose, whilst he forgot to provide the Observatory of the same town, a building due also to his liberality, with a good telescope, which would have been so useful for astronomical researches in the limpid sky of Greece. A third, spent several thousands of francs in having eminent works, English, French and German, translated into Greek, works, which

are fairly accessible in the original to the usually many-tongued Greek in the two Public Libraries of Athens, and which, owing to their nature, chiefly philological and scientific, are only read, understood and appreciated by a very limited class of readers. It would have been so much better to have undertaken the publication of national works—or even the translation of foreign standard books—of a nature more accessible to the general public and specially to the masses, who, at present, devour penny dreadfuls and shilling shockers.<sup>1</sup>

This latter want, *viz.* supplying the masses with useful books in a pleasant form, the above mentioned Association has undertaken, but it will apparently miss its aim, because its neatly bound and wonderfully cheap little books are written in the “purist” idiom and most of their interesting—in fact, beautiful—subjects are written in such a dry and pedantic manner that we doubt whether their ultimate destination will be anything else but the mere adornment of a working man’s cupboard. Curious to say, the President and the Honorary Secretary of this Association are men of letters, who have all along been partisans of the “spoken” idiom and of whom one might have expected better.

Mr. Psichari has exposed in his articles the folly of the enterprise and demonstrated the harm which it is doing. He naturally roused a great deal of ill-feeling. Still he did his duty by demonstrating the fallacy of such efforts and by placing the question on its true basis. His articles are reprinted in book form and are written in the usual caustic humour, in which Mr. Psichari excels, when expounding the eternal truth.

## VI.

Towards the end of 1901, he published a drama and a comedy,

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<sup>1</sup> Since writing the above, I am pleased to have to state that the poems of Solomos and Mardzokis, all in “spoken” modern Greek, have been included in these series.

preceded by a masterly preface, in which he deals extensively with linguistic, artistic and historical questions concerning chiefly Modern Greece. A deep symbolical meaning underlies both the drama and the comedy and a great breadth of poetry pervades the latter in the beautiful dialogues, which take place, as a sort of *leitmotiv*, at intervals, between the trees surrounding the scene of the piece.

After the riots, he wrote a number of articles and essays on the subject. Whilst they were eagerly sought after and accepted by the Continental Press, they were refused by the newspapers of Athens. Some of them were since published in book form under the title "Ρόδα καὶ Μῆλα" (Roses and Apples) and include a letter to the Patriarch and a reply from the latter couched in most affectionate terms towards Mr. Psichari and paying a just tribute to his erudition, although disagreeing with him on the language question.

## VII.

Before finishing this short notice, it is well to look back and see what has been done during the decade that followed the publication of Mr. Psichari's *Tò Ταξίδι μου*. His ideas seem to have gained ground day by day. No poetry is written nowadays in the "purist" form. All the poets of modern Greece write now in the language of Solomos and Valaority, the "spoken," the "vulgar" Greek, whether their works are profound symbolical poems or songs of love and sentiment. During the Olympic Games of 1896, the official world of Greece turned to Mr. Palamas, the leading modern Greek poet, and the beautiful hymn, which he composed on that occasion, was in "spoken" Greek. The feeling that such is the national language of modern Greece is so strong, that, even in 1872, when the "purist" language was reigning supreme in Greece and the "spoken" one was excluded from all poetical competitions, instituted under the auspices of the University, on another national occasion, the unveiling of the statue of

one of the first victims of the War of Independence, the Patriarch Gregory V, the University turned for a poem to Valaority, who never used anything but the so-called "vulgar" Greek in all his magnificent poems.

In the meantime, Mr. Roïdis has published his *Εἰδωλα*, which, although written in the "purist" idiom, have given a great blow to it. In an exhaustive and conclusive manner, this splendid book demolishes, one by one, the various idols, which have been raised by the purists for centuries, such as the so-called poverty of the language, the so-called drawbacks on account of simplicity of forms and the various abbreviations and alterations in pronunciation of modern Greek, the want of unity of the language and the multitude of its dialects, and proves the folly of the dreams of the purists and the impossibility of reviving a language dead and gone, whilst it shows the existence of a national tongue, common to all and quite fit to become a perfect literary and scientific organ. It is, and it will remain, one of the finest apologies of "Spoken Modern Greek."

Many works in prose have also appeared since in this Greek. Argyre Epthaloty (Mr. Michaelides), one of whose books has been translated in English, Pallis, Palamas, Vlachoyanni, Kambysi, Carcavitsas and many others have all contributed to the blossoming of such literature. Pallis has translated, in the purist "spoken" Greek, the *Iliad* of Homer and the *Merchant of Venice*, and his translations are quite worthy of the great originals.<sup>1</sup> He also made a most successful adaptation from the English of a short popular *Astronomy*, thus giving a lesson to the Association for the Propagation of useful Books, whose first issue was also an *Astronomy*, as to how books for the young and the uneducated ought to be

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<sup>1</sup> Mr. Pallis, whose translation of the Gospels roused the indignation of some Athenians and caused the riots in November 1901 is a first class Hellenist and has edited, in 1885, Sophocles' *Antigone* with annotations, which were very much appreciated amongst the *savants*, Greek and foreign.

written. Ephalioty, the Tourgueneff of modern Greece, as Mr. Psichari calls him, has, besides numerous poems in verse and prose, published, some months ago, the first volume of his History of Rhomaic Greece from the times of Constantine the Great to the present day. Another Greek, Marchetti, a brilliant graduate of the Paduan University, has also published an extremely good adaptation, in this language, of an English Political Economy. Vlachoyanni, a delicate poet and an indefatigable searcher of the records of the Modern Political History of Greece, is writing some of his historical essays in the same language. Meno Philinta, a man of talent and erudition, occupying the humble post of a primary school master in a small town of Asia Minor, has, besides a volume of poems, written a scientific Modern Greek Grammar, which will be published shortly. The advantage to the cause of "spoken" Greek in adapting it to such subjects is immense. Most of the newspapers publish—although rather rarely—articles in this form of Greek, and use much more freely in their purist articles the spoken form of words and expressions, thus facilitating the so very desirable amalgamation of the "spoken" language with the "written" one.

The time is certainly far, very far distant, when this question will be ultimately settled and when the victory of the national language will be complete. Still, looking carefully into what had happened in other countries; remembering that in Italy, after the *Divina Commedia* was written, people continued to write in Latin till 1600; that in France, "dog-latin" reigned supreme for many a century, it is not daring to assume that, in less than half a century, modern Greek will entirely throw away the burden of the "purist" language, which will then become to all, what it is now to few, *viz.*, the :

Aboli bibelot d' inanité sonore

of Mallarmé. Those, who think that an irreparable harm has already been done and who get impatient at the slow progress of the solution of the question, we would remind of Renan's view of

the subject, who said "that it was too early yet for Greece to have such a problem entirely solved."<sup>1</sup>

## CHIENSIS.

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<sup>1</sup> Psichari Et. Ng., xvii.

P.S.—*Such was the conclusion of this notice, which was written before the Gospel riots of Athens. Since then a breath of intolerance seems to be pervading Greece. The vulgarists are branded by the majority as degenerates. Newspapers favorable to the cause avoid discussing the question. A silence, full of contempt, meets the publication of works in the vulgar tongue. Professors and school-masters, suspected of supporting the vulgar tongue, are not viewed with a favorable eye by the Authorities. But, for all this, we have too much faith in the common sense and intelligence of our countrymen to alter the tone of our conclusion, which, under the present circumstances, is, we admit, rather an optimistic one.*

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1919

1920

1921

# Ancient and Modern Greek.

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By H. PERNOT.

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(N.B.—*The following serves as an Introductory Notice to the "Grammaire Grecque Moderne."* by H. PERNOT, Paris, Garnier Frères, 1897.)

## I.

### § 1.

1. Continuity of Greek.—2. Its origin.—3. Ancient dialects.—4. Supremacy of Athens and formation of a common tongue.—5. Foreign invasions : Latins, Slavs, Franks, Turks—Survival of Greek.

1. The language, which is spoken by the Greeks of to-day is nothing but ancient Greek itself, imperceptibly transformed, during the course of centuries, owing to physiological and psychological causes common to all spoken languages. Ancient, Mediæval, and Modern Greek are sometimes considered separately, but this treble division has but a relative value and we are justified in speaking of Greek as of a group of linguistic phenomena, which appear to us in an uninterrupted succession.

2. Ancient Greek, like Latin and Sanskrit, is derived from a prehistorical idiom, the locality of which is not well defined, and of which we only know what comparison of forms can indicate to us ; we are agreed to call this idiom, "*Indo-European*."

3. We know, however, as regards the ancient period, the destiny of the language we are dealing with here. At the period, to which could be referred the most ancient parts of the Homeric poems



(at about the IX Century B.C.), this language presented no unity whatever ; at that time, only local "patois" were in existence, of which some always remained vulgar dialects, whilst others raised themselves later on to the dignity of literary languages. We are agreed to divide these "patois" or dialects into two large groups, each comprising a certain number of subdivisions. Thus we have on one part the *Ionian* group, and on the other the *non-Ionian* ; the *Attic* dialect, that is to say, the language spoken at the time of Plato and Thucydides, the language in which the books of these two authors are written, is but a subsequent subdivision of the original *Ionian*.

4. After the *Medic Wars*, the supremacy of Athens brought in that of her dialect, in the same way, as, for instance, in France, the dialect of the *Ile-de-France* prevailed over those of the other regions, which, however, were originally its equals, and still pursues up to the present day the patois to their last intrenchments. Of course, such a predominance does not come into play without endangering the invading dialect ; and as the French we actually use, is not the pure dialect of the *Ile-de-France*, but the result of its cross-breeding with the other provincial idioms, in the same way the *attic* has undergone on certain points the influence of the idioms it was supplanting. The result of such a contact was the *κοινή*, or the "common tongue," which was in use in Greece since Alexander's time. To this *κοινή* revert the forms of Modern Greek both of Athens and of the other cities as well as those of the new patois which appeared later on on all the spots of the Hellenic soil.

5. The common tongue was only being spoken since a few centuries, when it underwent the influence of Latin which was introduced with the Roman Conquest (146 B.C.), and such an invasion imperilled its very existence. For a very long time the two civilizations and the two languages came into contact and struggled so closely as to make the Greeks adopt the name of *Ρωμαῖοι*,

(Romans), which they use up to the present day.<sup>1</sup> In fact, we might have seen a phenomenon, analogous to that which happened in Gaul; the conqueror imposing his language on the conquered. But nothing of the sort happened. Thanks to a surprising vitality, built up by a great literary past, and also, owing to an innate feeling of national pride, Greek resisted victoriously to this assault, the hardest one it ever had and the decisive defeat of Latin dates from the time of Justinian (VI Century A.D.)

The Slavonic invasions occurring immediately afterwards; the dominion of Franks who established themselves in the country after the 4th Crusade; and lastly, the conquest of Constantinople by the Turks in 1453, and the four centuries of slavery which followed, troubled the Greek language without crushing it; and, when at the dawn of the Revolution, the Klephts<sup>2</sup> told to the mountains their songs of freedom, they expressed themselves in the Homeric language. This language was certainly considerably transformed, but this very transformation is a brilliant proof of the fact that it never ceased to be spoken; generations transmitted it to generations by word of mouth, as a precious pledge of their latent vitality.

## § 2

1. Written tradition; imitation of ancient forms.—2. Appearance of a new literary language.—3. Comparison with the Romanic languages; state of diglossia.—4. Respective precincts of the learned language and of the ordinary one.—5. Differences of the two languages: as regards vocabulary, phonetic, morphology, syntax.—6. Greek and French; peculiar situation of Greek.

1. Greek, however, is not merely a spoken language; it has to its assets literary monuments. Besides the purely oral

<sup>1</sup> *οἱ Ῥωμαῖοι*, the Greeks; *τὰ Ῥωμαῖκα*, the ordinary Greek.

<sup>2</sup> Independent mountainous tribes in Northern Greece. *N.T.*

tradition, of which the various phases have just been briefly sketched, there is also the written tongue.

In the ancient times these two currents run almost parallel; from Homer to Plato and from Plato to Plutarch, for instance, the literary language has been transformed in a manner nearly parallel to that of the spoken one. Later on, however, specially during the Byzantine period, there is a change in the march of the two languages.

In the absence of really original productions, the writers attach themselves to the ancient masterpieces and not only imitate their substance, but also their form; and, whilst the spoken language continues its march, the literary tongue becomes stationary, absorbed in the imitation of ancient forms and conventional expressions.

2. As it might be expected, to such an evil a remedy was necessary and consequently by the XII Century or thereabouts a new idiom, based this time on the spoken language, makes its appearance in literature. It reminds one of those wild shoots with mangled trunks and scanty fruit in the plains of Athens, which grow timidly by the side of the secular olive trees. They also come from the old soil from which they draw a new life. When the grafting will be done, they will, in their turn, be fertilized and really to fertilize this new language, so full of sap, although perhaps still a little coarse, only writers are wanted, who will cultivate it.

3. The situation is thus similar to that which occurred, when French was struggling with scholastic Latin for predominance in literature. But, contrary to what happened in France, as well as in Spain and Italy, this new literary language did not succeed in entirely ejecting its rival. This is not because it did not produce, in the Middle ages and especially during the XVI Century, numerous works, some of which are quite remarkable, but because, a peculiar factor now comes into play, which props up the old

tottering language. The Romanic nations have never had to the same degree, as the Greeks, the sense of their descent and the worship of their most ancient traditions and, consequently, it is easy to understand why they were the first to succeed in getting rid of the yoke of an artificial and lifeless language, hardly adequate to the expression of modern ideas. The lettered Greeks, on the contrary, see in the scholastic language, to which their imagination lends an appearance of life, a proof of the ties which unite them to antiquity, and they endeavour, consequently, to keep it intact to the detriment of the new language, to which they are rather inclined to attach an idea of moral decay. Their War of Independence in 1821 confirmed them in this feeling, which has been propagated by the linguistic theories of Coray and his disciples; and in this way we see, up to the present day, Greece groaning, since many a century, under this peculiar diglossia.

4. Let us now briefly indicate the respective precincts of both these languages.

The scholastic language, called also "learned," or "purist," (*καθαρεύουσα*, *καθωμιλουμένη*, or even *καθωμιλημένη*, according to some) is chiefly a *written language*. It is the language in which most books in prose are written at present; the language of correspondence, of the newspapers, of advertisements and, generally speaking, of anything that partakes of publicity. It is the only language that children are taught in schools. It is the language used in official functions, in Parliament, the University and by some very rare pedants in every-day life.

The language called *ordinary* Greek, and by an unfortunate abuse *vulgar* Greek (*ἡ δημοτική, ἡ χυδαία, τὰ ῥωμαϊκά*) is taught nowhere in Greece; but *all* Greeks know and speak it naturally. It is in use in the Athenian drawing-rooms with a certain sprinkling, it is true, of learned forms. It is actually the only current tongue. Poets use it in preference to the scholastic language as more expressive and as having more life. Great names,

like those of Valaoritis and Solomos, have become illustrious through this medium. Lastly, it penetrates gradually into the precincts of prose, where its legitimate claim to become a literary instrument has been established practically in Mr. J. Psichari's book "*Tò Taξίδι μου*"<sup>1</sup>

5. The following example will now make us understand, in a more precise manner, in what this dualism of language consists.

To make matters clear let us take, for instance, this simple and ordinary sentence: "*At eleven o'clock, my father took his hat and went out with the children.*"

In ordinary Greek, there would be but one way to translate it: *στὶς ἑντεκα ὁ πατέρας πῆρε τὸ καπέλλο του καὶ βγῆκε μὲ τὰ παιδιὰ*. Let us change one word and the meaning will change at the same time, as it would be the case in English also: *φόρεσε* instead of *πῆρε* would mean he *put on*; *ἔφυγε* instead of *βγῆκε* would mean *he went away*.<sup>2</sup>

In scholastic Greek, on the contrary, this sentence is susceptible of many translations, all equally exact. In fact, how could we find uniformity in a language, which rests entirely on the fanciful imitation of ancient authors and where the most simple forms can vary according to the whims of the writer? One author will write: *εἰς τὰς ἑνδεκα ὁ πατήρ μου ἐπῆρε τὸ καπέλλον του καὶ ἐξῆλθε μὲ τὰ παιδιὰ*: another *εἰς τὰς ἑνδεκα ὁ πατήρ μου ἔλαβε τὸν πῖλον του καὶ ἐξῆλθε μετὰ τῶν παιδίων*; a third will replace *εἰς τὰς ἑνδεκα* by *τὴν ἑνδεκάτην*, and *τὸν πῖλον του* by *τὸν πῖλον αὐτοῦ* and so on to a

<sup>1</sup> J. Psichari *Tò Taξίδι μου* Athens, 1888. See also the very interesting publications in the illustrated Magazine the *Ἑστία*, as well as the charming series of short stories, *viz.*: *Νηϊώτικες ἱστορίαι* by Ἀργύρης Εφταλιώτης Athens 1894. *Ἀγριοπούλουδα* by Μπόεμ, Athens 1894.

<sup>2</sup> *᾽ς τις* or even *᾽ς τῆς* instead of *στὶς* is used sometimes; *ἑνδεκα* instead of *ἑντεκα*; these however, are not linguistic differences (as in any case the pronunciation is *Stis, endeka*), but merely differences in spelling, which have nothing to do with the question. *στὲς* instead of *στὶς* is a dialectical form.

degree impossible of definition ; such Greek, however, will not even be ancient Greek, since one could stop at St. John Chrysostomus, the other at Polybius and a third go as far as Plato.

Without laying stress on the want of precision existing in such a state of things, and on the real destitution lying under such an apparent wealth of forms, let us take the second of these translations : *εἰς τὰς ἑνδεκά οὐ πατήρ μου ἔλαβε τὸν πῦλον τοῦ καὶ ἐξῆλθε μετὰ τῶν παιδίων*, and compare it with the one in ordinary Greek. There is a quadruple difference :

1st—In the vocabulary : ordinary Greek : *καπέλλο, βγῆκε*, learned Greek : *πῦλος, ἐξῆλθεν*.

2nd—In the phonetic : ordinary Greek : *σις, ἑντεκα* (pronounced : *endeka*) ; learned Greek : *εἰς, ἑνδεκα* (pronounced *entheka*).

3rd—In the morphology : ordinary Greek : *τις, πατέρας* (declined *ὁ πατέρας τοῦ πατέρα*) ; learned Greek : *τάς, πατήρ*, (declined *ὁ πατήρ, τοῦ πατρός*).

4th—In the Syntax : ordinary Greek : *μετὰ τὰ παιδία* (acc.) ; learned Greek : *μετὰ τῶν παιδίων* (Gen.)

These data could be generalized and thus give an idea of the fundamental differences separating ordinary from learned Greek.

6. This established, it will not be difficult to admit that such a state of things is peculiar to Greek, and could in no way be compared to what actually occurs in English. It has been said that notable differences existed between the English of books and oral English ; it is true that a written language is never a true image of the spoken one ; but it would be a mistake to conclude from this that there is dualism of language in English. Literary English is intimately connected with the oral one from which it emanates and the evolution of which it closely follows. We *say* and we *write* : *bread, house, gloves, they find, I found myself*, etc. On the contrary, in Greece, the written language and the spoken one walk so as to say in opposite directions : the first walks backwards in defiance to all ideas of evolution and tends to become

motionless in a clumsy imitation of the past ; the second follows a normal progress which drives it daily away from the former. The Greeks write *ἄσπρος, οἶκος* or *οἰκία, χειρόκτια, εὐρίσκονσι, εὐρισκόμην* but say, *ψωμί, σπíti, γάντια, βρίσκουν, βρισκόμουν*. Consequently, we have here a special state of things in Greek, and we easily understand the smile of the stranger when he finds out that in Athens the newspapers are not written in the current idiom, and that a peasant, without a preliminary study, is unable to understand the ordinary news of the papers ; in Parliament, speeches are made in one language and interruptions in another and even in the bills of fare of restaurants we read *οἶνος λευκός, οἶνος μέλας* whilst everybody knows, indicates, and calls for *ἄσπρο κρασί, μαῦρο κρασί* *white wine, red wine*.

—q—

## II.

### § 1.

1. Alleged Corruption.—2. Foreign Words.—3. Distinction between style and language.—4. Solomos, a linguist.

We will now examine briefly the chief objections to ordinary Greek, when considered as a constitutive element of the modern literary language.

1. This Greek is often accused as being a corrupted language. But who does not know to-day that such a word, applied to languages, is entirely devoid of sense? Languages are incessantly being transformed, because they are the products of human activity and because they are spoken through the medium of organs, which are themselves subject to the laws of alteration and evolution ; they are, as it has often been said, in a state of a perpetual change ; consequently, there can be no question of corruption where we find a necessary and logical progress ; otherwise,

each language ought to be considered corrupted, when compared to that of some centuries ago, and Plato's Greek itself could be called barbarous with respect to that of Homer.

2. It is further alleged that this so-called corruption is due to the long slavery Greeks have been subjected to, as if languages did not contain in themselves the cause of their transformations, and, to prove such an allegation, the numerous foreign words, gradually introduced in the spoken Greek and which are supposed to have stained its purity, are brought forward. Such an argument, however, would soon lose its value, when we admit that modern Greek is a language similar to all other languages and when we look round and see what is going on everywhere. We are stating nothing new when we mention the well known fact that all the languages of the world have words of foreign importation, and that, for instance, the French words, *guerre, gant, joli, boulevard, caprice* and many others of equally every-day use were not originally French. Who ignores the destiny of such words as *bougette* and *tonnelle* crossing the Channel and returning to France with a different meaning under the form of *budget* and *tunnel*? Such changes are the inevitable result of the intercourse of different nationalities and are always useful, from a linguistic point of view. Words, thus imported and admitted in every day's use, constitute real historical monuments, which nobody has the right, on the strength of pre-conceived ideas, to destroy. Certainly nobody has ever thought of banishing from French the numerous Spanish or German words used in that language on the plea that the introduction of such words reminds France of national defeats or of centuries of oppression.

Let us take an example in Greek. *Τουφέκι rifle* is rejected as a xenism by the purists, who propose to replace it by the word *όπλον arms*, without concerning themselves about the difference in the meaning of these two words. Naturally, for them, such a word ought to be banished, since it is derived from the Turkish word *tufenk*. In examining, how-



ever, closely this word, we find that the Greeks have changed the *u* in this word into an *ou*, in accordance with the phonetic laws of their language which does not possess a *u*; consequently the word has not been implanted with a barbarous sound. Further, the Turkish termination, which was a consonant, has become a vowel in Greek: they say *τουφέκι* not *τουφέκ* or *τουφέγκ*. What is the object of this final *ι*? To a casual observer it is a mere additional letter, but to those, who look further into the intimate nature of the language, it is the expression of a physiological fact; the Greek, who first said *τουφέκι* with an *ι* knew well how to speak his language and was really doing so by placing implicitly such a word in a determined grammatical category; he was declining *τὸ τουφέκι, τοῦ τουφεκιοῦ, τὰ τουφέκια*, etc., as he would the word *τὸ μάτι* (from *ὁ μᾶτιον*), the eye *τοῦ ματιοῦ, τὰ μάτια*, etc. Further, this word took another meaning in his mouth; it became the symbol of freedom.

Besides, this new comer at once used its legitimately acquired rights of citizenship; it gave birth to *τουφεκιά* a shot (*cf.* to *σπαθιά* a thrust with a sword) to *τουφεκίζω* (to shoot) *τουφεκισμός* (a volley). Do not the purists understand that, by suppressing such words, they wipe out history and mutilate the ancient language itself by impeding its normal progress and by cutting away its most vigorous off-shoots?

On what principle do they form their list of proscription? Will it comprise all foreign words? But then they should use the axe on the trunk of the tree itself, in the Greek of Plato and Thucydides; *βάλσαμον, κυπάρισσος, λίβανον, μέταλλον, κάλαμος*, and many other words of ancient Greek are of a semitic origin.<sup>1</sup>

To dethrone, *πένα pen*, a foreign word, we should find another word besides *κάλαμος*, which is also foreign. The alphabet itself would disappear since its letters, the idols of the purists, are not Greek even by name.

<sup>1</sup> E. Renan, *Histoire des langues sémitiques*, p. 205.

Will only recent words be banished ? in what category then will such words as *πόρτα*, counting 14 centuries of existence in the language, be classed, since they also can boast of a respectable antiquity ? On the other hand, how are words like *ὁ καφές* *coffee* (gen. τοῦ καφέ nom. plu. οἱ καφέδες.) *τὸ λουκούμι* *Turkish Delight* (gen. τοῦ λουκουμιῦ nom. plu. τὰ λουκούμια) to be replaced ? No equivalents have so far been found, although some composite words, such as *μαυροζούμι* "*black broth*" or *τερψιφαρύγγιον* *delight of the pharynx*" have come into requisition. The very fact that in every way the purists' theory admits of exceptions, is a sufficient proof of the fallacy of the principle.

This question, in order to have any sense from a linguistic point of view, should be put quite differently. Foreign words for a people are those which are unknown to them ; an *ordinary* term such as *τουφέκι* or *τουφεκισμός* cannot possibly be classed as such. The only foreign words in Greek are those which are unearthed at all moments by the purists such as *πίλος* instead of *καπέλλο*, *ὁ πατήρ*, *τοῦ πατρός*, instead of *ὁ πατέρας*, *τοῦ πατέρα*, etc.

3. The confusion between language and style is equally a source of numerous misunderstandings. "One of the arguments which are most frequently brought forward in favour of the use of the ancient language, writes Mr. J. Psichari<sup>1</sup> is the following : "Do you mean to say that Racine or Goethe spoke the language of common people ?" I do not, of course, think that this has ever been questioned. There is a touch in this question which, although insignificant in appearance, has, however, a most deep meaning. Certainly, Racine did not speak in verse as ordinary people did ; but he *used* their language. I do not suppose that the French Cockney uses daily a style as solemn as that of "*Athalie* : "

"oui, je viens dans son temple adorer l' Eternel !

Still each of these words is, even to the present day, popular. "It may be objected perhaps that it is not a common habit

<sup>1</sup> Questions d histoire et de linguistique, p. 443.

“to call the Almighty “L’Eternel,” but this is again a question of style. We come across the word *éternel* in the most familiar language in its form *sempiternel* “un sempiternel bavard.”<sup>1</sup> This, however, does not occur in Greek and consequently we cannot have an exact comparison of the two languages. On the contrary, in Greek, the reverse of what occurs in French happens; in speaking as people do, the people’s language is not used. If I want to express a very simple idea: my daughter is ill, I will say ἡ κόρη μου εἶναι ἄρρωστη. On the other hand, if I say: ἡ θυγάτηρ μου ἀσθενεῖ it is certain that I do not speak the language of the people, but for all this I do not express an idea of a higher order; I speak like the people, but in a different language.”

4. Solomos, who was a linguist as well as a poet, has expressed all these various considerations in a Dialogue little known, of which we will give here some extracts.<sup>2</sup> A poet and a purist, a σοφολογιώτατος as he calls him ironically, are discussing the question:

The Poet.—...The master of language is the people.

The Purist.—This is very strange. One of our most wise men has held that if we wanted to write in the language of the people we should necessarily think as people do.

The Poet.—Such judgments are utterly wrong. It is true that Condillac has declared that words are signs of thoughts; but he never meant to say that those who use identical words have also the same ideas. Money, in the country we live in, has a fixed value: still, in my hands, it may lose it entirely, as I do not know how to use it, in yours, its value increases, as you use it skilfully; in those of a third person, it may perhaps become still more productive. If your theory

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<sup>1</sup> “*Eternel*, which is to-day such a beautiful word, is derived, not from the classical, but from the barbarous latin ‘aeternalis.’”

<sup>2</sup> The present English translation is from the original. N.T.

be true, all the inhabitants of one and the same country should have the very same thoughts ; but their thoughts are as different as their appearance. Suppose for instance, that, unfortunately for our nation, a purist loses his mind ; it is more than likely that he will give vent to his folly in the same words which he used heretofore. Does it follow that he thinks as logically as you do ?

Purist.—Certainly not. Still to use the same words as common people do, is a thing that nobody saw anywhere.

The Poet.—Quite the contrary. In what situation are we and our language ? Have we a great writer, who could serve us as a model, who, with the images he has employed and the passions he has depicted, has really imparted a nobility to such terms ?

The Purist.—A writer like Homer, no, certainly not.

The Poet.—You look too high, my dear fellow. Now, tell me what should we do ?

The Purist.—Go back to the ancient forms, take as many of them as possible, add those of ours, which the ancients did not possess, but give them an antique form.

The Poet.—Why ?

The Purist.—Because such forms are the most noble.

The Poet.—Tell me, really, are you talking conscientiously ?

The Purist.—Yes, by the Helicon !

The Poet.—A terrible oath which, I assure you, makes me shudder. But, I believe, your reason must have been crushed by the efforts you made to learn the forms you are talking about. And since you and yours hope to enlighten the nation with the alphabet in hand, tell me, which alphabet do you consider more noble, ours or the Italian ?

The Purist.—But the letters of the various alphabets are equally noble.

The Poet.—Which means that they are not so by themselves. When they are scattered about, what do they mean ? Comes the Printer, selects them, puts them into order ; I see

heaven, *Markos Botsaris*,<sup>1</sup> *purist*. I bow before the first; I shed tears before the second; at the third, I am seized with an irrepressible laughter. Words are like letters; their nobility depends on the art with which they are employed.

The Purist.—But, whatever care we may take, modern Greek forms will be none the less corrupted. Why do you stare at me in this way?

The Poet.—I am looking at your white hairs.

The Purist.—What have they to do with words?

The Poet.—They have to do with time. Time, which renders venerable your hair, transforms everything in this world, including words, you may be sure.

The Purist.—But what nobility can words have in our language, if they are corrupted?

The Poet.—The nobility, which English words had before Shakespeare, French before Racine, ancient Greek, before Homer. ...The nobility of words is like that of men; you are noble, because your father and grand-father were such; but, going further back, you will certainly find an ancestor who was playing the flute; whilst tending sheep.

The Purist.—.....Then?

The Poet.—Then all the words of the Greek people...

The Purist.—(*excitedly*) Won't you stop bringing forward the people as a master! On what authority do you make such an assertion?

The Poet.—On many. On many. Bacon talks somewhere of certain people who think that all has been said; you, on the contrary, think that nothing has been said.

The Purist.—Will you, please, quote me one of your authorities?

The Poet.—Remember the man you were mentioning just now, as this is the opportune moment.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A Hero of the Greek Revolution. N.T.

<sup>2</sup> This refers to a portion of the dialogue omitted here for brevity's sake. N.T.

The Purist.—Whom? Socrates?

The Poet.—Yes; Socrates himself and, as I see you get into a flutter on simply hearing his name, I will crush you under the weight of his very words:

“Alcibiades. Οἶμαι ἔγωγε· ἀλλὰ γοῦν πολλὰ οἶοι τ' εἰσὶ (οἱ πολλοὶ) διδάσκειν σπουδαιότερα τοῦ πεττεῦειν.—Socrates. Ποῖα ταῦτα;—Alc. “Οἷον καὶ τὸ ἐλληνίζειν παρὰ τούτων ἔγωγ' ἔμαθον, καὶ οὐκ ἂν ἔχοιμι εἰπεῖν ἔμμαντοῦ διδάσκαλον, ἀλλ' εἰς τοὺς αὐτοὺς ἀναφέρω, οὓς σὺ φῆς οὐ σπουδαίους εἶναι διδασκάλους.—Socr. Ἄλλ' ὦ γενναῖε, τούτον μὲν ἀγαθοὶ διδάσκαλοι οἱ πολλοὶ καὶ δικαίως ἐπαινοῦντ' ἂν αὐτῶν εἰς διδασκαλίαν.—Alc. Τί δῆ;—Socr. Ὅτι ἔχουσι περὶ αὐτά, ἃ χρὴ τοὺς ἀγαθοὺς διδασκάλους ἔχειν.<sup>1</sup>

The Purist.—But perhaps Socrates meant to say something else.

The Poet.—Is it you that you put to me such questions, you a Hellenist? This, however, is your business.

The Purist.—Well, I must agree. They are beautiful words.

The Poet.—Rather beautiful thoughts; yes, beautiful thoughts. And what is it that you want to do? To allow each of us to write according to his own fancy? and on what

<sup>1</sup> Alc.—I think that they can; at any rate, they (the many) can teach many far better things than to play at draughts.

Soc.—What things?

Alc.—Why, for example, I learned to speak Greek of them and I cannot say who was my teacher or to whom I am to attribute my knowledge of Greek, if not to those good-for-nothing teachers, as you call them.

Soc.—Why, yes, my friend; and the many are good enough teachers of Greek, and some of their instructions in that line may be justly praised.

Alc.—Why is that?

Soc.—Why, because they have the qualities which good teachers ought to have.

(The Dialogues of Plato, translated into English by B. Jowett, M.A., &c. Oxford at the Clarendon Press, MDCCCXCII, Vol. II, page 473.)

authority? by that of his own talent and learning? Well, an intelligent and learned man will form words as he likes, another will do the same, a third, something worse and, in this way, we will soon be in a complete confusion. This is why the nature of such matters wants that words should be formed not by the mouth of one or two men, but by the mouth of a whole people.

The Purist.—(*in a low voice*). Do you believe that Plato (God forgive me!) Plato, I say, himself who said it, wrote as people talked?

The Poet.—I don't believe it; besides, who does?

The Purist.—Those who belong to the vulgarist faction.

The Poet.—Your statement is wrong.

The Purist.—But were you not all along saying this yourself?

The Poet.—Nothing of the kind. Up to this, I did not say how we should write our language; what I have been saying up to this and what I proved to you, was that the form of words, when they are common to everybody, is not liable to be changed by anyone on the plea of improvement; I said nothing else.

The Purist.—But why did you refer to Plato's sayings?

The Poet.—To convince you that the meaning of words is taught to the author by the people.

The Purist.—So the written language will be quite a different thing from the spoken one.

The Poet.—No, not quite a different thing. What Bacon says about nature, *viz.*, that the Philosopher, before conquering her, must submit himself to her laws, we may apply to the language; submit yourself to it, and, if you are strong enough, conquer it.

The Purist.—I do not understand how this could be done.

The Poet.—In this way. From the examples I will quote, you will see when the author must follow the people in his sentences and when not; that the form of words, which the people use, is not changed by the author; that a word to become noble

only requires the art of the author; if I quote foreign authors, don't blame me; it is no fault of mine:—

Quando fui desto innanzi la dimane  
Pianger sentii fra il sonno i miei figliuoli  
Ch' eran con meco, e dimandar del pane.<sup>1</sup>

Pray observe this. Do you remember that great miracle of Art, Hugolino? do not these words go to your heart?

The Purist.—Yes, they do.

The Poet.—And still there is no metaphor in them, no grand sentences; in these three verses the Poet has closely followed the people's tongue; I may also here remark that the “con meco,” which Italians find quite correct, cannot but come from the common people, because an author would not dare to create it himself.<sup>2</sup> In this connection pray remember the *δω* of Homer, the *ca'* of Dante and many others and you will see that it is not the author who creates them; try yourself instead of *ψωμί* (ng. for *bread*) to say *ψω* and you will see the result.

The Purist.—Can you give me some example which will show me how words which appear to us vulgar may become ennobled?

The Poet.—Certainly, but they never change form—But tell me first, do words like *sollevò*, *peccator*, *capo*, *pasto*, *forbendo*, *capelli*,<sup>3</sup> appear noble to you?

The Purist.—The last three seem to me very vulgar indeed.

The Poet.—

La bocca sollevò dal fiero pasto  
Quel peccator, forbendolla a' capelli  
Del capo, ch' egli avea di retro guasto.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> When I awoke before morn—I heard my sons crying in their sleep they were with me and were asking for bread. (Dante. Inferno, XXXIII, 37-39.)

<sup>2</sup> In fact the expression *con meco* is eminently barbarous from an etymological point of view: cum mecum.

<sup>3</sup> Raised, sinner, head, repast, wiping, hair.

<sup>4</sup> The sinner raised his mouth from the horrible repast—wiping it on the hair of the head he had gnawed at the back. (Dante. Inferno, XXX, 3).



Now do these words *forbendo* and *pasto* make you shudder or not?

The Purist.—...

This dialogue of Solomos, which unfortunately does not exist in its entirety, is all the more valuable to us, when we take into consideration that it was written in 1824 and when we compare it with Coray's writings at the time on the same subject. It is worth reading in the original. But who reads Solomos now-a-days? It is with great difficulty that some copies of his works can be procured from the Athenian book-sellers. There is no edition worthy of this poet, who in this respect has been less fortunate than Valaoritis.<sup>1</sup>

### III.

1. Existence of a common tongue.—2. Pretended poverty of the ordinary language.—3. Learned words.

1. Another objection, which the Purists never tire to bring forward, is the variety of modern dialects in Greek. "There is no "ordinary Greek proper," they assert. "In one village the word "father is *κύρης*, in another *τούρης*, in a third *ἀφέντης* or *ἀφένκης*; "in Tsakonia *ἀντε* (*āpros*) and *ῥο* (= *ῥδωρ*) stand for *bread* "and *water* and so on. Each village and each region possesses "its own forms and its own expressions and in ordinary Greek. "there is no unity whatever."

Let us admit for a moment such an objection. The learned language will not improve thereby; the anarchy, which reigns there supreme, will not cease by any means and at all events it does not follow that we would meet with more success, if we try to resuscitate a whole grammatical system, which would be in direct opposition to the grammar of these dialects. But in fact there is no foundation whatsoever in such an objection.

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<sup>1</sup> Fortunately this is no longer correct at the present day. All true literary artists in Greece consider Solomos as their master now-a-days and a beautiful edition of his works has lately appeared. N.T.

An Athenian, speaking ordinary Greek, without mixing any learned forms, will be perfectly understood in all parts of Greece. And if, in a Tsakonian or some other village, he comes across a peasant and they cannot understand each other, this occurrence would not certainly be in favour of the Purists' argument. France has also many dialects and in certain remote villages the priests are obliged to preach in *patois* or in *Breton* in order to be understood by their congregation; would this mean that there is no common French tongue? In the same way, the variety of Greek dialects and their exclusive use by certain individuals, does not, in the least, imply the non-existence of a common modern Greek tongue. It only proves that such a tongue has not been imposed everywhere. As regards the dialectical forms *κύρης*, *τσύρης*, *δέφντης* and *δέφγκης*, there is the form *πατέρας* which is or can be understood by everybody. The Tsakonian peasant who says *ἄντε* and *ῥο* does not ignore that the corresponding words in the common tongue are *ψωμί* and *νερό*. When he speaks Greek, he employs these latter words. *Πατέρας*, *ψωμί*, *νερό*, can therefore be called common forms.

Besides, the question of the modern *κοινή* presents itself to us under two aspects, slightly differing from each other. The existence of a common "spoken" language may be questioned, as well as that of a common "literary" one. Although the latter is by far the most difficult to settle, it is at the same time the easier, because the borders of a literary language are less extended than those of the spoken one and because the phonetic differences, which often are the only ones that constitute dialectical divergences, are, in most instances, merged into the uniformity of writing; the *λ* of the word *πουλί* "bird" will be pronounced, according to regions, either as an *l* simple or as a liquid *l* and a word like *κρασί* wine will be always written in the same way, notwithstanding the nature of consonants or vowels composing it. Besides the existence of a common literary Greek language is further proved, more than sufficiently, by the innumerable poems of the folklore, which have been composed in this language and circulate up to the present day throughout Greece.

2. We have now to deal with the last argument brought forward by the Purists. The ordinary tongue, they say, is poor and incapable of expressing abstract ideas.

An excellent reply to such a reproach has been given by Mr. Roïdis in his book "The Idols"<sup>1</sup> and we could do no better than refer the reader to it. Such an accusation is unjust from the very beginning. Whoever examines carefully the modern Greek literary productions will, on the contrary, be struck at once with the enormous richness of their vocabulary. This language will in the future be a source of surprise to us. As regards myself, I have a vivid recollection of the months I spent in many parts of Greece in close contact with common folks. An hour's talk with them will tell more of the future of this language than all the arguments of the purists. They have a poetical and subtle mind; they will willingly discuss philosophy after extemporizing distichs; their tongue is varied, limpid, harmonious; their expressions precise and picturesque. By them the literary Greek language has a solid and broad basis to stand upon.

3. It is often thought that to write vulgar Greek, means to be condemned to use strictly words belonging to common folks. But this is not so. In Greece, as well as elsewhere, perhaps even less than elsewhere, the ideas of the learned differ as regards amplitude from those of the peasant and naturally the amount of words necessary for expressing such ideas is not the same in both cases. Our own language is formed of a double element, the popular and the learned one; words like *poetry*, *geometry*, *linguistic* are not familiar to our peasants and a number of such words as *direct*, *grave*, *idea*, although of ordinary use are none the less of a learned creation. Consequently, the writer in Greek, can borrow from the ancient language the words he requires, if such words do not exist in the common tongue. The only rule, he will have to observe in such a case, will be to form

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<sup>1</sup> Ε. Δ. Ροϊδου. Τὰ Εἰδωλα, γλωσσικὴ μελέτη, Athens, 1893.

them in accordance with the grammatical system of the latter. A form like ἡ ποίησις gen. τῆς ποιήσεως dat. τῇ ποιήσει will never have the chance of becoming panhellenic; it may be found in newspapers or heard from the lips of the purists; it will always live an artificial life, because the Greek people do not know any more the dative, and have lost the ancient declension *ις—εως*. All the efforts to revive it are bound to prove fruitless and may only result in some grammatical monstrosity.<sup>1</sup> But, on the other hand, people will say ἡ βρύση, τῆς βρύσης (pg. ἡ βρύσις, τῆς βρύσεως) *the fountain*; ἡ πόλις, τῆς πόλεως (pg. ἡ πόλις, τῆς πόλεως) *the town*. This new declension has deep historical roots; it has existed for centuries; therefore the only logical system will be to form the above quoted word ἡ ποίησις *poetry* as ἡ ποίησις, τῆς ποίησις. Thus transformed, the word, as well as the idea it expresses, can pass into ordinary use. It is on the same principle that French conjugate *je pense, tu penses, il pense*, etc., a learned word in the same way as they do *je songe, tu songes, il songe*, which is an ordinary word.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> τῆς δδός, εἰμεθα παρών, ἐνδροπή, ὀρδύκι are very often heard even from the lips of the educated. N.T.

<sup>2</sup> Without these learned importations, used with discrimination, literary French would have been a language eminently poor.

The reader may find interesting the following statistics taken from the "Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue française by A. Brachet (p. lxx.) As the author himself points out, the figures he gives cannot bear a very close examination; they only express approximately the relative proportion of the various elements which have contributed to the formation of the French language.

"Statistics of Modern French."

|                                      |     |     |            |
|--------------------------------------|-----|-----|------------|
| I. Words of an unknown origin        | ... | ... | 650 words. |
| II. Words of popular origin (4,200). |     |     |            |
| a Latin element (primitive words)    | ... | ... | 3,800      |
| b Germanic element                   | ... | ... | 420        |
| c Greek element                      | ... | ... | 20         |
| d Celtic element                     | ... | ... | 20         |

Carried over ... 4,910 words.

To those, however, who consider this pretended pooriness as an indelible blemish in modern Greek, we could always quote the following passage of Descartes:—

“If I write in French,” he says, “which is the language of my country, in preference to Latin, which is that of my teachers, it is because I hope that those who only use their pure and unadulterated reasoning will judge my opinions better than those who only believe in ancient books; and as regards those, who combine common sense with learning and whom only I wish to be my judges, I am sure they will not be so partial to Latin so as to refuse listening to my reasons, because I explain them in the vulgar tongue.”<sup>1</sup>

Is not the fact that the author of the “Discours de la Méthode” was almost apologizing in this way for writing a *philosophical book in the vulgar tongue*, whilst, a century later,

Brought forward ... 4,910 words.

### III. Words of foreign origin (917).

|                 |                |               |     |     |
|-----------------|----------------|---------------|-----|-----|
| a Italian       | ...            | ...           | ... | 450 |
| b Provencial    | ...            | ...           | ... | 50  |
| c Spanish       | ...            | ...           | ... | 100 |
| d German        | ...            | ...           | ... | 60  |
| e English       | ...            | ...           | ... | 100 |
| f Slavonic (16) | Semitic (110). |               |     |     |
|                 | Oriental (16)  | American (20) | ... | 162 |

### IV. Words of historical origin (115). Words from

|                  |     |     |     |     |
|------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Onomatopœia (40) | ... | ... | ... | 145 |
|------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|

TOTAL ... 5,977 words.

If from about 27,000 words contained in the “Dictionnaire de l’Académie Française” we deduct these 5,977 words we have 21,000 words created either by the people developing the primitive ones through composition or derivation—or by the learned, borrowing directly from Greek and Latin a number of words.

In other words more than a third of all the French words is of a learned origin.

<sup>1</sup> Descartes. Discours de la Méthode. éd. in—16°. Hachette 1895, p. 132.

this very tongue was spreading the philosophical ideas all over the world, is not this fact, we say, sufficient to justify and encourage the efforts and aspirations of the vulgarists in Greece?

The state of diglossia, which we have described here, has, nevertheless, disastrous consequences for the Greek Nation, on which we will not dwell here, but which can only hasten its ruin. For the impartial observer, however, the issue of this conflict between life and death cannot be doubtful; in his struggle with the old Charon on the marble arenas, the Palikare, renewing the tradition of ancient Hercules, will eventually vanquish him altogether.

#### IV.

If the reader wishes to go further into the various questions, which were merely touched upon here, as well as into others connected with them, he may refer to the works of Mr. J. Psichari, which have constantly guided me in what I have written above, specially to:

Essais de Grammaire historique Néo-grecque (I Part. Paris, Leroux 1886, p. 235 and following.

Questions d'Histoire et de Linguistique, Constantinople, J. Palamary, 1888.

Τὸ Ταῖξι μὲν. Athens 1888.

He will also find a detailed list of other scientific works relating to Modern Greek in the "Etudes de Philologie Neó-grecque" published under the supervision of Mr. J. Psichari, Paris, Bouillon 1892, pages cxxi-cciii.

We might add here a few words as regards the correct system of spelling Modern Greek. Such a spelling, as understood in the present day, is chiefly historical; thus, for instance, we write *παιδί child*, *ῥωτῶ I ask*, in conformity with etymology, from *παιδίον*, *ἔρωτῶ*. For the same reason, it appears logical to write *λιώνω to melt*, and not *λυώνω*, *σπίτι house*, and not *σπίτη*, since the first comes from *δλεγιώνω* and the second from the Latin word *hospitium*. We will also write *μέρες, days*, and not *μέραις*

(ancient Greek *ἡμέραι*), since it is quite clear that the termination is borrowed from the 3rd declension of ancient Greek, *μητέρες, ἐλπίδες*, etc. Also it is correct to spell *ἡ πόλη, τῆς πόλης* and not *ἡ πόλις, τῆς πόλις*, because the termination is borrowed from the 1st declension, *ἡ κεφαλὴ τῆς κεφαλῆς, ἡ κόρη, τῆς κόρης*.

At times, however, historical spelling must give way to phonetic. Thus we shall write : *έντεκα eleven, άντρας man, γαμπρός bridegroom*, instead of *ένδεκα, άνδρας, γαυβρός* to avoid the pronunciation historically wrong, *endeka, andras γαμβρος*.

There is a certain amount of questions, rather difficult to answer, as regards accentuation. Some write *ταῖρι, a couple*, according to the rule that the accentuated penultimate syllable, when long and followed by a short one, takes the circumflex cf. *σῶμα, γλῶσσα*, etc. Others, considering that the word comes from *ἐταίριον* keep the acute accent it originally had. The last rule appears to be the most correct, as, by doing so, we restrain the use of circumflex, a useless complication now-a-days, since the two accents, the acute and the circumflex, are, in the present state of pronunciation, identical. Forms like *τοῦ μαθητῆ of the pupil, τοῦ καφετζῆ of the coffee house-keeper, ὁ παρὰς κοιν τοῦ παρὰ, ἡ ἀλεποῦ the fox τῆς ἀλεπούς*, on which I kept the usual circumflex, could also be written with the acute accent, in conformity with the spirit of ancient accentuation, since in these finals there is no trace whatever of contraction.

The following works might be consulted as regards grammatical questions of Modern Greek.

1. *Grammaire grecque moderne, suivi du Panorama de la Grèce d' Alexandre Soutsos, par Emile Legrand, Paris, Maisonneuve 1878.*

2. *Romaic or Modern Greek Grammar by E. A. Sophocles, Boston, 1879.*

3. *Simon Portius, Grammatica linguae græcæ vulgaris, ré-*

production de l'édition de 1638, suivie d' un commentaire grammatical et historique par Wilhelm Meyer avec une introduction de Jean Psichari (78e fasc. de la Bibl. de l'Ecole des Hautes Etudes) Paris, Vieweg 1889.

4. Praktisches Lehrbuch der neugriechischen Volkssprache, herausgeg. von Carl Wied, 2nd Edit. Hartleben's Verlag.

5. Handbuch der neugriechischen Volkssprache Grammatik. Texte. Glossar. Von Dr. Albert Thumb, Strassburg. Trübner 1895.

6. Beiträge zur neugriechischen Wortbildungslehre, dissertation inaugurale présentée à l' Université de Tübingen, par N. Dossios, Zurich, 1879.





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# The Literary Battle in Greece.

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By J. N. PSICHARI.

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(N.B.—*the following appeared in the Revue de Paris, Paris, March, 1901.*)

On the 7th June, 1900 according to the old style, the 20th June, according to the new, and the 23rd of the month of Safar of the 1318th year of the Hegira, a newspaper of Constantinople, the *Takhydromos*, in a number, where all these dates appear, published an interview of two columns and several lines, which one of its reporters, Mr. Eustathe P. Joannes had on Sunday, the 17th June, with Pierre Loti, who was then passing through Constantinople.

The reporter found him in a large drawing room of the Pera Palace during "the melancholy hours of the twilight." Mr. Enstathe P. Joannes questions Pierre Loti, who replies in the purest Greek. He first states his impressions on British India which, under British rule, is devastated by famine and "plague;" "the French bitterness was vividly depicted on the lips of the "French novelist." From India they naturally pass on to Constantinople, to the fresh impressions of the traveller; but very soon the literary preoccupations of the reporter make a deviation to the conversation. Mr. Eustathe P. Joannes wants to know what Loti thinks of Carmen Sylva; Loti satisfies his curiosity. Mr. Eustathe P. Joannes wants his opinion on Paul Bourget "who is considered the chief of the phycho-physiological movement" Loti gives him his opinion; a dialogue, which we shall mention presently, ensues....Then the reporter praises Loti about his book on Jerusalem; the holy city has never been studied so thoroughly.

"The Greek Literature will perhaps fill the gap with the imminent publication of a work on Jerusalem by a celebrated literary man, Epaminondas Kyriakides."

After many confidences, which the ingenious reporter manages to extort from Pierre Loti on the most varied subjects, *viz.*, on Persia, Jerusalem, the Chinese and the Japanese, on the secret of his mission to far away countries, on Paris and its high-storied houses, on his stay in that city, on his entrance into the Academy, and the news of his election, which reached him whilst he was travelling, the interview comes to an end. It had lasted three quarters of an hour. At the end Mr. Eustathe P. Joannes, flooded by the electric light of the Pera Palace, departs to the tune of a band.

This is not all, however. In all this light, in all this music, amongst the big names and the great facts, which pervaded this long interview, the author of the present article feels quite confused at not having been forgotten. The following is the dialogue, which took place about him just at the moment, when Pierre Loti was, according to the reporter, explaining his feelings about Paul Bourget.

"Do you know Mr. Psichari and what do you think of the school of which he proclaims himself the chief ?

"A sincere sympathy attracts me towards the family of Mr. Psichari ; the great Renan, the father-in-law, as you know, of Mr. Psichari, stood as my god-father at the French Academy ; I am, therefore, bound to them by the same tie, which makes me feel grateful towards the sage, who is dead. I think, however, that the heresy, of which the son-in-law of Renan wishes to be the chief, lowers the value of the Hellenic existence itself. If Greece is still considered a noble nation, a nation towards which Europe has a debt of honour, this is due, to a great extent, to its literature, which goes as far back as ancient Hellenism. Consequently, whoever endeavours to break a tie, which the Greek language has preserved up to the present day and, so as to say, made eternal, he, I think, undertakes

“the lowering of the Hellene himself and of all his virtues.  
 “This is why I think Mr. Psichari injures his country by becoming the chief of such a heresy.

“It is well, adds the reporter, that these words of the great academician should be read, more than once, by all those who, through obstinacy as well as conviction, tend to become more Psicharists than Psichari himself.”

The wish of Mr. Eustathe P. Joannes has been realised beyond his hopes. From the day following their publication, these words created a sensation. British India, the Pera Palace, the electric globes, the Chinese, Paul Bourget, Carmen Sylva, Jerusalem and the illustrious Epaminondas Kyriakides himself, disappeared, as if by magic, from the public's mind full now of a revived anger against the Heresiarch, who has just been branded by the academician. Articles succeeded articles; the newspapers of Athens and Constantinople had leaders with the following headings in large letters: *Antihellenic and Antinational work by the Heresiarch*. Such terms by and by were eventually attributed to Pierre Loti himself. What an arm against heresy is the word of an academician! A professor of comparative grammar in the University of Athens was shielding himself behind the interview of the *Takhydromos* in order to brand with more violence the impious criminal.

This fine outburst of indignation, however, has cooled down, for a moment, at the following publication, in the *Asty*<sup>1</sup> of the 16th July, 1900; the original is dated *Rocheport* 2nd July.

“My Dear Sir,

“And yet, you know very well what interviews are worth; specially mine, when I am in the moon, my usual residence.

“The only absolute true fact in this incident is my unalterable admiration and affection for Mr. Renan. I remember a stranger at Pera, telling me: “His son-in-law is endeavouring to demolish the Greek language by creating a sort of an ultra

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<sup>1</sup> An Athenian newspaper. N.T.

"modern volapuk." I must have replied: "Ah! really, it is absurd to demolish such a beautiful language." I have said this in a flying interview, anxious to get rid of my interviewer, who, I must say, was most courteous and amiable, as I had an appointment in Stamboul. I am a plain uncultured man, ignorant of everything, and this was the first time I heard your work mentioned. You may rest assured that I never used such expressions as Anti-hellenic and Anti-national. Am I likely to have done so? am I in the habit of using such pompous words?

"I most willingly withdraw all I have said and I am sorry if I had in any way been disagreeable to you. In the extreme haste of a departure for China, I beg, my dear sir, to ask you to accept, without any ill feeling, the expression of my most cordial remembrance.

PIERRE LOTI.

This letter, for which I thank most heartily once more the Poet and the gallant man, has the advantage to reduce to its true brevity the interview, which was supposed to have lasted three-quarters of an hour; at the same time, it cancels entirely all the strange utterances, which Mr. Eustathe P. Joannes did not hesitate to attribute to Pierre Loti and which we did not like to reproduce here in detail.

We do not think, however, that we insult in any way our readers by supposing that they are as uncultured, as the Poet of the vast horizons considers so goodnaturedly himself to be. In a debate, in which, according to what Mr. Eustathe P. Joannes says and to what Anatole France, Gaston Deschamps, H. Pernot, Philéas Lebesgue have already written, I have had my part, it was difficult to bring myself forward. This, however, was undertaken by the *Takhydromos*. In what will follow, I will put aside the person of the heresiarch and confine myself to study the heresy. A living drama in the domain of thought is being, at present, acted in Greece and we shall briefly relate it.

## I.

There are souls in Greece ; there are many souls amongst the people in the islands, in the mountains, all along the plains. But they still keep their secret ; the Greek soul ceased to speak since many a century ; it has not told us of its dreams, it has not revealed to us its kingdom nor its vision of the inner world. In one word, it has not yet shown its true colouring. This is why, when we are eager to become acquainted with all that is new to Europe as regards literature, Greece hardly comes into play, except occasionally here and there. This is not because she has nothing new to offer. This country has always remained artistic ; its people are intelligent, ready of comprehension, quick in action ; the liveliness of their impressions, of their sensations, which are at times thunder striking, is always mixed with a certain deepness of feeling, unknown to other people. The Greek is lucid and passionate ; he is full of life. Still such a life, such an originality, have not, up to the present day, succeeded in expressing themselves fully and completely.

What is the reason of this ?

The explanation is simple enough and we shall state it here quite plainly. In Greece or, to be more precise, in all the countries, in which the Greek language is spoken, in the Hellenic kingdom and in Greece, which is still in subjection, the people speak one language and write another.

A Frenchman of to-day says *vin* for wine, *pain* for bread ; let us suppose that he would write *panis* and *vinum* or rather *pastillus* and *temetum* thus changing not only the termination but the word itself. This, however, is what Greeks do for all their every day words : the *baker*, the *oven* of the baker, the *pork butcher*, the animals, from the *bird* to the *elephant*, the *house*, the *doors* and *windows*, the *family*, *father*, *mother*, *child*, all these words, when written, are translated into another language. They speak Modern Greek and write the ancient language. Let us take three Italian words : *date mi pane* "give me bread" ; in

Greece, the sentence would at once be corrected and *date mihi panem* would be written instead, with this difference that the correction is generally much more rigorous than what it would appear in this small example taken at random; it upsets and destroys the harmony of natural talk.

The object of primary schools, in Greece, is to make such corrections. In a series of articles of deep learning and luminous logic, published in this very *Takkydromos* of Constantinople, Mr. Ph. Photiades, a man of great value, having at heart the future of the Greek child, has explored the fallacy of such a teaching. He shows how the pupil, as soon as he enters school, is thrown into a vortex and slowly swallowed up. Let us take an analogous comparison. In the laboratories of histology the nerve and fibre of the animal, which has been put to sleep, are isolated, by means of appropriate instruments, in order to be studied specially. This fibre or this nerve is separated from all the tissues. The primary school isolates in a similar manner the child and separates it from the outer world. This, of course, is done to the detriment of all his organism; and life, by such a process, is afflicted for ever.

The reader will perhaps now understand why, whilst all contemporary literatures have asserted themselves, Greece has not so far been able to make her voice heard. Mr. Photiades, who appears to have found new thoughts on a subject, on which everything has already been said, makes a very clever and simple remark on the point.

He compares to the exercises in use in the primary schools of his country, a small French book written by Mr. T. Carré for the use of children between seven and nine years of age, containing a number of incomplete sentences, in which the pupil has to fill the dotted lines, with the *ordinary* and *precise* word. For instance; "the.....kills the ox, the calf and the sheep and sells their meat "raw." In Greece, the *butcher*, which word would suggest itself at once to the mind of the pupil, must not be used under its true name, but a learned equivalent must be substituted. Evidently,

says Mr. Photiades, the idea which inspired Mr. Carré in the composition of his book has not been studied sufficiently. Mr. Carré says in his short preface; "My young friends, it is for you that I have composed this little book. If you choose carefully the word, which, in each sentence, must replace the dots, you will get accustomed, when speaking and writing, to always use the correct word, which will express what you want to say and nothing else." Mr. Photiades adds that all the secret of a good style lies in this. In fact, precision is the first condition of composition and custom its great master; a *cat* is called a *cat* and no literature could exist outside the pale of life.

These truths are so elementary that one is inclined to ask how is it that they have not as yet been understood in Greece. The answer is very simple; the *ordinary* and *precise* word is considered as vile, abject and vulgar. The fisher of sponges, for instance, notwithstanding all the poetry, which his name evokes in the country of blue seas, loses his name, because he is donned with a noble one, which the fisherman himself neither employs nor understands. In the Athenian Press the *Aiglon* of Mr. Rostand becomes a pompous, amorphous, unpronounceable antique bird, whilst the vulgar, modern eaglet exists, in the language of the people, has been consecrated by poetry and immediately evokes thousands of charming and superb figures. But it is not *noble*. We must change it. This is mere aberration! you will tell me. Not quite, my friends. The idea of evolution, so familiar now to us, has not so far penetrated the Hellenic brain. From the narrow point of view of the Purist, languages evolve in a terrible manner. Let us open the Dictionary of Darmesteter Hatzfeld and Thomas at the word *Aigle*. We will find this simple line: Etym: from the Latin *Aquila* m. became *Aqu'la-Ag'la*, *Aigle*: then let us consult the chapter of "Affixes" and take the affix *on* = "from the Latin *o-onis*" which we find in the names of so many animals, *becasson*, *cochon*, *oison*, and of so many substantives: *aiguillon*, *bedon*, *fleuron*. Please note that here the affix is immaterial, as the word, to which it is added, does



not acquire any particular meaning. In some words, this affix increases the object ; we say *ballon*, because *ballon* is larger than *balle* ; in others, it diminishes it, when, for instance, it is affixed to the names of certain animals ; *ânon*, *chaton*, *liron*, *raton*. Thus the word *Aiglon* has been formed. Is not all this dreadful and does it not impress you as a fearful mixture of corruption and non-sense ? But, for all this, the word *Aiglon* is none the less charming.

These contradictions, through which the scientific man tries to follow the movements of life and the play of the human soul, these peculiar mutilations, which unveil to the enquirer a supreme law of harmony, these massacres of vowels and consonants, this perpetual *corruption*, which is nothing else but a constant development, occur every where and at all times. The language of Plato, when compared to that of Homer, is a language particularly corrupt ; the language of the New Testament, when compared to that of Plato, is simply putrid. This putrefaction, by the normal course of events, was still going on, when Fauriel was collecting the splendid songs, which the Greeks were singing on the sea or at the top of Mount Olympus.

*Vulgar* Greek is, therefore, the legitimate and direct descendant of ancient Greek, which, at its time, was also vulgar. Some shrewd people have understood that, by talking of corruption and by taxing as barbarous the popular language of the Greeks, they were cutting a sorry figure before Europe, who judges matters differently and whose judgment they value so much. They have, consequently, stated clearly that, by adopting the learned language, they were merely yielding to "superior necessities" but that, thank goodness, nobody now-a-days in Greece was so behind times as to consider the normal development of the language as a deficiency in good taste.

I would like to believe in such a progress of their minds. Unfortunately facts make me rather sceptical. At the bottom of all these aspirations to atticism, at the bottom of the Purists' brains there is but one idea, but one prejudice, *viz.*, that *modern* Greek is a *vulgar* tongue. This is the principal and the only one

objection. All the other arguments, brought forward against the literary use of this unfortunate Greek, are simply additional; they all rest on sophistry or on an imperfect knowledge of the question and very often on a complete ignorance of the dishonoured language. These arguments are simply used in order to hide the chief reproach to the language, *viz.*, its baseness and vulgarity. An Athenian newspaper, having exhausted all its arguments, has, a few weeks ago, organized a "plebiscit." It appointed rogatory commissions in the Provinces. A professor of comparative grammar in the University of Athens, was directing this plebiscit. It was a question of consulting the people—which means a large number of subscribers to the paper!—We were going at last to learn which language the people themselves preferred, *viz.*, their own or that of these gentlemen. Probably both paper and professor had other motives than those of serving science purely and simply. The fact is that we got never acquainted with the results of the balloting. I am told that a workman appeared before one of these rogatory commissions. He was asked about a learned term, but he understood it in its vulgar meaning. The whole matter stopped there, but to save the situation a series of interviews were started by this paper, a system fruitful of some results in Greece. The reporters went to the Metropolitan of Athens and to the Minister of Public Instruction. The communications, which were made on that occasion, are very precious, as they give us the opinion of Government and that of an important dignitary of the Church.

His Grace expressed the touching wish to see modern Greek returning to Xenophon's language. Evidently the Metropolitan is not "up to date," as Xenophon, for the Hellenists, does not hold the *record* of atticism. Perhaps many people expected a different wish from this worthy Ecclesiastic and the language of the Gospel would have been a more logical indication on his part. It is true that its language is very vulgar. The Metropolitan prefers the classical antiquity. In fact, he gives a most ingenious recipe to enable us to bring on the golden era; it will, he says, be

sufficient for the newspapers to put every morning into circulation one ancient word ; only one is quite sufficient ; in the course of twenty years this will make seven thousand words, *viz.* : a whole language : the people will learn it and will forget all ill-sounding words, which they still use through "sheer ignorance."

The Minister of Public Instruction is far less accommodating. He speaks with authority. He starts by declaring that "the question does not exist." There is but one language in Greece, the "learned" one. Certainly—he condescends to say—people can do what they like ; they can write, as they please, when it is a question of writing a novel or composing a poem. But the official language of Greece, "the language of the State," will never sink to the degree of baseness, which we find in the language of the *vulgarists*. Nobody will dare to draw up "an Act" in such a language. It would be tantamount to a "crime," which the minister or the "Senate of the University" would never tolerate.

It is evident that His Excellency does not rise beyond a rather narrow minded conception ; to his eyes the nobleness is in the form of the word, not in its sense. In those countries, where studies in general have not advanced much, the language appears to confine itself merely to words, and no importance is attached to its context and its spirit. The language of the State that is all ; the rest does not count and cannot be taken up seriously, since it only concerns novels and poems. Literature can go to the dogs. We always go back, you see, to the fundamental idea : *viz.*, of interdicting the popular language on account of its vulgarity.

Is not this a rather novel idea of conceiving patriotism ? They assert that a nation gets debased, when it speaks its natural language and they pretend that such an assertion honours the nation. They do not understand that all Greeks will, consequently, be considered barbarians, since in their conversation they use such a corrupt language ; in fact, through dialectical varieties, from the "patois," by the force of circumstances, a language, common to all Greeks, has been formed in Greece, in the same way as in France or in Italy ; everywhere a language is spoken which,

notwithstanding local divergences, is understood indiscriminately by the citizens of the same country. It goes without saying, that, as far as Greece is concerned, this fact has been denied; it gives too good a hold against those who tell us: "You, who want to write in the language of the people, which dialect are you going definitely to choose?" But is not such a question rather surprising when heard from those, who constantly claim to descend from the ancient Greeks? Each poet and each prose-writer of the antiquity was writing in his own *patois*. Plato was proud of using nothing but words purely local and popular. This was considered as writing in the purest attic idiom.

It is just on this point that the Greek Grammarians of to-day, whilst thinking that they are approaching antiquity the most, get the furthest away from it. They want to prove that Greece has not degenerated, that she has not altered the language of her Gods, that she has not suffered from the contact of Oriental peoples and, by their assertions, they do quite the contrary. This contempt for the native tongue, this concoction of a language purely artificial, these prejudices, this affectation of nobility and reproach of vulgarity do not belong to the antique mind but to the oriental. In Japan, the master talks to his servant a language in which the latter has not the right to reply. It is a well known fact that such a state of *diglossia* is common to all the East; the Chinese and the Arabs have two languages, nay two grammars, a written and a spoken one. They say *pain* and put on paper *pastillus*.<sup>1</sup> This is a turn of mind peculiar to the oriental, who loves to caress only the outline of things, without going into their very marrow. And the Greeks have not escaped from such a contamination. By a significant coincidence, the first vulgarists, Solomos and Valaority, come from the Ionian Islands, which were

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Chailley-Bert in his interesting book "Java et ses habitants" Paris, 1901, states p. 9, a similar state of things. N.T.

"La langue même assouplit ses formes et sa nuance à l'infini. Elle a cinq ou six idiomes: pour la cour et la noblesse, pour les égaux entre eux, pour le supérieur et l'inférieur, etc., J' appelle le domestique:

never subjugated to the Turks. Crete, before the Turks took Candia, has produced, in the living language, dramas and a magnificent *mystery*. Even up to the present day, the first champions of new ideas have been brought up from their childhood in the freedom and the refined civilization of the West ; Greece, on the contrary, when she thinks she is reverting to Xenophon, shows that she has not as yet released herself from the moral clasp of the Turk.

But let us be just. To go back to the ancient language, even to that of Xenophon, would have been a beautiful dream. Is, however, such a dream capable of realization? Certainly not. A true imitation of the ancients would consist in producing things modern, as the ancients themselves did. If there were, if we could feel at times in the Purists some beautiful intoxication, some madness of love for the antique thought, for the antique soul, for the antique genius, as used to be the case in the time of the Renaissance! But no. They attach themselves merely to the form, to the grammar, to an emptiness in a miserable, petty, narrow way. Have they, with all their desperate attempts at archaism, approached at least the antique model, even conceived in such a manner? Alas! whoever has drunk at the golden sources, whoever has felt, even for a moment, the soul of Sophocles vibrating under his writings, endures a strange torment in reading their prose.

This learned language, this language pretended classic, this very language, which appeared to be so dear to the Athenian Minister of Public Instruction, is really the most peculiar and incongruous mixture imaginable. The French are undoubtedly not aware that they have a responsible part in it. The *savants*, who in their cabinets composed this gaudy mosaic, have borrowed at random the elements of their vocabulary and their specimen of style on one occasion from Plato, on another from the New Testament and on a third from what the Byzantine have produced most decadent,

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“Fais seller le cheval”: Se revient: “J’ai fais seller le cheval.”  
 “Aucun des termes de l’ordre ne se retrouve dans la réponse: chacun  
 ‘de nous s’est servi envers l’autre de la langue qu’il fallait.....”

as far as language is concerned. The necessities of modern life have obliged the Purist to use particles and turns of sentences, which are, in themselves alone, more decomposed and more corrupt than the whole of the Vulgar language. French also has argely contributed to all this. The cosmopolitan language of the newspapers has contributed an amount of raw "gallicisms" such as: *dans un moment donné, suivant les circonstances, tendance à la nationalité, toucher à la corde sensible*, etc. Such a hybrid phraseology, put into an attic form, produces invariably a most comic effect.

This Purist language is also the cause of a serious misunderstanding. We know, either from experience or through our children, that all professors in colleges as well as at the Sorbonne, always carefully recommend their pupils to avoid abstract expressions in translating French into Greek or Latin, but specially Greek, but to use them freely, when translating Latin or Greek into French. Thus a good pupil's paper will have the sentence "similar to one who thinks" "*similis cogitanti*" rendered by "*l'attitude de la méditation*." In the attic period, the Greeks, strange to say, had no abstract words for expressing *eloquence, genius* and so many other things, which they possessed in abundance; even in this, they had the horror of pompousness. The vulgar tongue remained faithful in this respect to the ancient spirit. In most cases it expresses or, as French grammarians would say, it "turns" the sentence by a verb or an adjective. Purists have used even this as an argument against vulgar Greek and at once accused it of poorness; our grammarians, so particular of atticism, find fault with it for not resembling the neo-latin languages, where abstract words abound so much. This is a peculiar reproach, when we think that ancient Greek had the same failing, not owing to poverty but on account of its nature: in fact, the Greek language has always possessed a peculiar facility for creating such sentences. Even up to the present day, the people use most sparingly their treasures; and one would think that they instinctively arrived at the refined culture of a writer, like Taine, who, in a work on

Aesthetics, banished carefully from it all abstract words. But the Greek Purists are far from even suspecting such a supreme purism.

We can now easily see by what skilled misunderstandings, by what ignorance, by what minute care and peculiar means the anti-vulgarists endeavour to take away the Greek soul from its natural midst. Soul and language is one and the same thing. What really happens in Greece is the systematic adulteration of the native soul. According to the words used, this soul becomes in turn palæo-Greek, mediæval or Frankish and is never its own self.

Latently, however, there appears to be some relaxation in the excessive purism of former years. Fifteen years ago, an athenian morning paper deputed, at the time of its issue, *viz.*, at midnight or at two o'clock in the morning, one of its contributors to Mr. Kondos, the head of purism, in order to enquire from him, *in extremis*, if a word used in one of its articles was in conformity with the attic canon. At the present day, there is a party of moderates. An Association, a *Syllogos* as it is called there, has been established "for the propagation of useful books." Certainly nothing could be more laudable than such an object. But the *Syllogos* has not limited its ambition simply to that. A committee of nine members—the number of the Muses—has been appointed with the object of "supervising the language used in the books, which should be as far as "possible regular and uniform and equally distant from the "archaic idiom as well as from the language called vulgar." It looks almost like the Venitian Council of Ten; naturally it is only a grammatical council. But is it, after all, composed of grammarians? Not so. By a combination, which reveals a youthful and almost primitive turn of mind, this reform of the language has been entrusted to merchants, or retired merchants, engineers, astronomers, professors of Law, all chosen amongst those who have a certain position in "society"; men supposed, through an old prejudice, to be connected with the Purist language. Such are the members of the council. Here is a peculiar characteristic of habits; in Greece, the man of letters, the

learned man, if he be not rich and a man of the world, is not much thought of. Money appears to replace Science and this is why, in the *Syllogos*, there is none of the representatives of the new school, or even a badly retributed professor.

But does the *Syllogos* do any useful work? We should like to be able to say so. It publishes small volumes at 3*d.* each, with a cover, on which, by an unfortunate idea, an *hetaira* has been reproduced, probably with the intention of representing some other antique figure. Fifteen thousand copies of the first volume have, we are told, been sold. And this is dreadful when we think of it; because, needless to say, the *Syllogos* has neither reformed nor simplified anything as far as the language is concerned. With the money at its disposal, it propagates, on the contrary, all the ideas and prejudices which, as we have seen, contaminate this beautiful country. Such is the reform obtained.

But perhaps we are getting alarmed rather unnecessarily. Whoever knows Greece a little, is well aware that sometimes books, when bought, are not always read. It often happens that the vanity of the Athenian or the half educated provincial is flattered, when he has in his book-shelf a book he does not understand, specially when the price of the book is not dear. For the very same reason he becomes a subscriber to a newspaper. The circulation of the most popular penny newspaper does not exceed 15,000 copies—exactly the number of the booklets of the *Syllogos*. For 4 millions of Greeks this is not much. The reason of this is that, even without taking into consideration villagers, the Greek workman, artisan or petty dealer, the small fry, so as to say, although thirsty of learning, does not know what is going on in his own country and cannot read and understand the booklets of the *Syllogos* any more than he does his newspaper. It is certain that even when he understands, he does so, as a rule, only half way. Let us admit that there are two thousands, three thousands or, at the very utmost, five thousands of Greeks in the whole world, who are capable of reading well and understanding thoroughly purist Greek. There are amongst them, thousand or five hundred chiefly journalists, to whom the Purist rigmaroll



has become a sort of second nature and who write it almost without an effort. This evil is so deeply rooted in them that, not having studied methodically their maternal language in school, they are quite at sea, when it is a question of writing it. And still this language is deeply rooted in them. Even journalists cannot write their artificial language without twitching; there are as many languages as individuals; and such languages vary by reason of the number of vulgarisms which each author admits, according to his own fancy or knowledge.

In fact, there is not a single Greek who does speak the learned language without mixing with it a good number of vulgarisms. When the Greek is unrestrained, he speaks all the time the vulgar tongue. In Parliament, the members, except those, who have a great practice, are obliged to read their speeches: otherwise, they could not help letting out vulgarisms as this is proved by the interruptions, which are all made in the vulgar tongue.

Such is the state of things in Greece. The Purist public is really very limited. For the *Syllogos*, as well as for all Associations of its kind, the bulk of the nation does not count. There lies the chief fault. It would, perhaps, have been more wise if such work were entrusted not to astronomers or engineers, but to competent linguists, to professional "savants," to serious literary men or simply to men with common sense. The question is a most practical one; let us put aside all unattainable and unhealthy dreams. A country can get on without anything, even without literature—with difficulty I admit—but not without a tongue. By the latter, we mean a tongue which all citizens can learn to read and write—a tongue that can be taught. And only the popular tongue can fill up all these conditions. A remarkable fact, which ought to open the eyes even of those who are most short sighted, is that an artificial tongue may well be written, taught or spoken; nevertheless the people and even the cultivated men, owing to laws beyond their control, will put invariably into the vulgar, namely, the modern tongue, whatever is presented to them in the learned one. It is also certain that from such a process hybrid forms are produced to the detriment of the ancient

ones, as well as of the fine natural talk. Primary and secondary schools show no other results than those we state above.

The partisans of Purism, however honorable their intentions may be, do nothing but actually obey a badly defined instinct. Under the pretext of moderation and of half measures, certain wise men, wishing to avoid the excesses of purism and those of vulgarism, fall themselves into worse excesses; and such no doubt is misunderstanding life and not taking into an exact account what human organs and secular habits can render possible; not choosing appropriate food which people could digest; not discerning what they would reject; to sum up, giving to a whole nation, without duly thinking, a grammar, a vocabulary, a language, which distort its mouth and its soul. The language of the people is but one, and the true wisdom, from Malherbe—nay from Homer!—downwards, consists in confining ourselves to the rule of never using a word, which is not susceptible of becoming usual. Whenever French had need of learned words, it did not take them quite raw from Latin, or declined them on classical models; but it threw them into the common mould and they became French words, like the rest. In Greece, it is not even a question of those refined schools, which we see dawning in the West, and which like to go back to the past in order to escape from the dullness of the present. When, for instance, Mr. Bédier, in his beautiful “*Roman de Tristan et Yseut*,” uses the pretty name of “*Foi Tenant*” or beautiful words such as, for instance, “*démesure*” or “*déduits de vénerie*” or rare ones like “*forhu*” and “*nombles*,” there is not a single Frenchman, even he be a peasant, who could not learn to repeat those words. Mr. Bédier does not touch the essence of the language and he does not translate into Latin. The Purists’ school, however little refined in its aesthetics, or not very fond of subtleties, has quite a different way of operating. It tantamounts as if Mr. Rostand, for instance, instead of calling his piece “*l’Aiglon*” gave it a classical name such as *Aquilae pullus* which is declinable. How could French people learn to decline it? When a word exists in the people’s tongue, let us take it as it stands; when we are obliged to draw

words from ancient Greek, the simplest and most practical way would be to adapt the borrowed words to the living form, guided naturally by common sense and good taste.

Still such an elementary principle has been contested as well as many others, although none of the alleged reasons could hold its own, in face of the demonstration of truth, since none was valid. All serious and learned men in Germany—K. Krumbacher, A. Thumb, K. Dieterich—have sided with the good cause. They know Greece for having lived there. In France, we are less advanced. Some “savants” not numerous, evidently deceived by appearances and wrong information, seem to sympathise with the Purists’ attempts. It is true, that in most cases, they must not have read either the books written in the learned tongue or those in the vulgar. Since they discuss such a simple question, would it not have been better at least to be first well informed? Those of our “savants” who would like to take part in the discussion will do well to first study thoroughly the general and detailed arguments of the question.<sup>1</sup>

Such matters call for meditation, for they deal with a subject involving no less a question than that of the future of a beautiful country, full of life and feeling. The imprecision, which one remarks in the mind of the Greek, let us be frank the inconsistency of his character comes from the very inconsistency of the language. The family ties so touching and deep-rooted in Greece are at stakes and so is, at the same time, the moral sense. Here is a whole country, where poor mothers cannot correspond with their expatriated sons, since they cannot themselves read or even understand the letters fabricated in fine style by the first public

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<sup>1</sup> Such arguments will be found in the Athenian newspapers, *viz.*, the *Ephimeris* (4th September, 1888), the *Asty* (26th January, 26th, 28th, 29th July, 1895; 22nd, 23rd June, 1900; 15th September, 1900; 27th, 28th December, 1900), and specially in the pamphlet on the “*Sylogos for the propagation of useful books*” (Athens 1900). They will, I am sure, readily grasp the question, for what is necessary to persistently shout in Athens, requires but few words to be understood in Paris. In fact, never was a single one of all these arguments either refuted or even closely examined.

scribe their sons come across. And what shall we say about the great interests of the State? I have before me two books: one a vocabulary of the Navy, the other that of the Army. All the usual terms, familiar to the soldier and the sailor, all the historical and living words, the tradition of which is so curious and rich in glory, all, without exception, have been wiped off, expelled, branded and words cold, foreign, incomprehensible, have been coined in their stead on the plea that they are ancient and therefore noble. It is terrible to go over works, where well intended people take care to create a confusion of languages, and to think of the words of the Minister of Public Instruction declaring "that the question does not exist." A few more efforts of this kind and, in a short time, it will be Greece itself that will cease to exist.

## II.

Montaigne, who wrote the "Essais," used to speak Latin, when he was a child. There were always two traditions in France: one of Scholastic Latin and the other, which eventually triumphed, of vulgar French. In Greece, in the middle ages, there were likewise two traditions; from the XII Century, Modern Greek commenced its development by the side of Scholastic Greek. The latter went on weakening every day and giving way to the off-shoots of the popular forms. At the beginning of the XIX Century, Coray came and galvanized the impoverished and half-dead Greek. He restored to life the Purist prejudice which exists up to the present; he did in every respect the reverse of what a Montaigne would have done. Coray was neither poet, artist, or writer. He was only a philologist. In a debate, in which literature itself is directly concerned, this sounds peculiar. Modern Greece is young still and does not yet know that to be a great scholar is not the same as to be a great writer.

The fact is that the learned language proved to be unfit for literary creations. It does not possess works of imagination, unless we consider as such "Louki Laras" a novel of

"*European reputation*" according to the perhaps rather candid expression of an Athenian critic. This work of Mr. Bikelas is no doubt curious and it was original on his part to have chosen, in the history of the Greek Independence War, a personage so little equal to that magnificent epopee. Even the Purist language itself has been written in a far more elegant style by men like Mr. Roidis and really Mr. Bikelas' book, which we must confess is slightly dull, hardly satisfies our present ideas of Art, the novel and style and could not be seriously taken into consideration. The author, even in Greece, is, we must say, considered by impartial critics as rather retrograde. After a life spent in business, he placed himself, at a moment when public mind was attracted elsewhere, at the head of the *Syllogos* we have just mentioned. Mr. Bikelas had himself started his literary career by some verses in the spoken tongue. At the time he was foretelling correctly that the Purists, by holding so tightly to the ancients, would, some fine morning, make them fall on their heads.

He was then only following the impetus given by others at the beginning of the century. In fact, modern Greek literature was first affirmed through poetry, and made the latter its domain. We mean the XIX Century, without going further back to the Cretan tragedies of the XVII. Whilst Coray was imposing his grammatical canons and purifying the popular words, the Greek people were simply singing their songs. And they sung them so well that these songs constitute the most glorious literary monument of Modern Greek. Solomos and Valaority, who were true poets of the good sort, came next and thus the vulgar tongue was consecrated ever since as the language of poetry.

By the logical development inherent to every literature, prose ought to come in turn. And it did come. The first book written in the vulgar tongue appeared in the spring of 1888.... The crime of the "heresiarch" for which he was, as we have seen, branded by the *Takhydromos*, was to have written this book and some others since in this very same tongue.

Ever since, novels, tales and dramas, written in such a tongue, appear to be on the increase. On another occasion, we shall tell

of the thought and feeling contained in these works, so bright and fresh. In fact, the direct appeal to life could not possibly fail to find an echo in the artists of a people, so full of life. The new century has begun well; it was inaugurated by a number, written in this good tongue, of a newspaper published at Limasol in that poor Cyprus, which longs to be entirely free and tries at all costs to defend itself against the invasion of the English language. Even in Greece itself, the "language of the State" this supreme pædium has already received the first blow. A judge at Volo—Mr. Stellakis—evidently a sort of a French Magnaud—has dared, quite recently, to deliver a judgment written in the vulgar tongue. It is true that there was a talk of dismissing him and that the text of his judgment was rejected by the Court of Appeal; the case no doubt will eventually end before the *Areopagus*.<sup>1</sup> But the deed is done. The Church has, in turn, realized that, in order to appeal to the masses, the simplest way would be to talk to them, as the Apostles did, in their own tongue. Some months ago, in November 8th, 1900, a Cretan *Syllogos*, more advanced than the Athenian one, was celebrating its anniversary and the speech of the day, full of a beautiful, patriotic and religious breath, was made by His Grace the Bishop of Rhetymmo, Mgr. Dionysios, in the purest vulgar tongue. We can foretell that Crete, hardly emancipated, will resume its former initiative and its high literary tradition.

This banished language, which many—always without knowing or having studied it—consider insufficient, weak and abject, appears to be so well grounded that, in the course of a few years, it became fit to be employed in any scientific or literary work. A vulgarist is at present composing a Manual of Political Economy! This shows that decisive acts have been accomplished and are being accomplished every day.

In face of this the hesitation of some fastidious—if this is a proper term—persons is rather astonishing. A young Athenian critic, Mr. N. Episcopopoulo, stated, a few days ago, that the great

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<sup>1</sup> The High Court in Greece. N.T.

writer, who would sanction the popular forms, had not as yet made his appearance. We can assure him that he need not trouble himself about this. What does he want more than Solomos and Valaority, to say nothing of the immortal Folklore? Is not this already considerable as regards Poetry? The prose, which has since appeared, can also hold its own and has even managed to fix, with a certain rigidity, the popular forms. As regards the intrinsic value of such works, this young journalist need not distress himself. They are quite sufficient for the present state of mind in Greece and more than what certain critics of to-day can understand.

Some, despairing to find other arguments, clamour for a Dante. Such a yearning is rather amusing in a country, where an Art more akin than his, is so little understood. Would those, who want a Dante, be able to appreciate him? Have they ever read Dante? I do not believe it; for if they had, they would have seen that Dante used in his prose the learned tongue, *viz.*, Latin. Perhaps he is only invoked as a Poet. But in poetry, has not Greece had already its Dante, a Dante of thousand names and voices, its people poet? Its popular poems can well stand the comparison with the greatest poet of modern times; as Dante, they have, coming after the ancient era, re-created for Greece a moral world, varied and new.

No; do not let us complicate a situation so simple in itself. It is not necessary to have a Dante in order to think and write properly. To walk in the streets, with an etymological dictionary in our pocket, to look at it for each word we are going to employ, in order to see if it is classical, dialectical or foreign, is simply absurd, specially in a country, where foreign words cease to be such, because, the moment they are admitted in the language, they adopt at once the national declension. To lose our time in order to deliberately substitute an abstruse grammar to the living one and an ancient word to a modern picturesque one, because, the former is nobler—is folly, pure and simple, and nothing else. To call *bread* by its name we do not require a Dante, but simply, since we are in Greece, one or two grains of hellebore.

# The Gospel Riots in Greece.

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By J. N. PSICHARI.

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(N.B.—*The following appeared in the "La Revue" (formerly the "Reveu des Revues") of Paris, in January, 1902.*)

The events, which, a month ago, disturbed Greece are still fresh in everybody's memory. The students took possession of the University and made of it a sort of a "*Fort Chabrol*"; manifests, riots, fights, in which men were killed, took place in the streets of Athens. The students, strongly objecting to the translation in vulgar Greek of St. Matthew's Gospel by Mr. Pallis, which was being published in the Athenian newspaper the *Acropolis*, were clamouring for the excommunication of all translators of the Gospels. Such a request, however, was not granted. The riots became very serious, the Prime Minister was nearly killed and the Ministry resigned. These events appeared very peculiar to Europe and, as we all know, the emotion there was great.<sup>1</sup>

Greece has the peculiarity of interesting people in her affairs. This is no doubt to her glory but at the same time it becomes annoying. Greece is inclined to forget that Europe has her eyes fixed on her and fails to realize the right angle at which the Old West looks at and judges things. Some Greeks notice this at times. Then they get excited and express their excitement in a peculiar manner. In their anxiety to remove bad impressions, they deny events or present them in a prepared light. Their suscepti-

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<sup>1</sup> See Appendix. N.T.



bility gets excited and irritated, because Europe appears to them hostile and at times malevolent. No doubt the crime—there is really no other word for it—which the Powers committed towards Crete in 1897, has hardly been redeemed. This, however, was due to politics and we know that they are never beautiful. Greece is loved and even some Governments take an interest in her destinies. To retain the love of the Philhellenes, to create an atmosphere of good reputation, there is no need whatever to be too touchy or unable to tolerate a reproach or to think that the slightest criticism would injure her national prestige.

Such a system is deplorable as well as unadvisable. Plato was in ecstasies before a glimpse of truth. Let us worship it as he did. For truth is not only beautiful but is after all the best and surest of policies. Nothing is more practical than truth. How could people believe the enthusiasm, the love that Greece inspires us with, or even all the good things that is fair we should tell about her, if we were not also to tell her faults? The intolerant Greek is tiring and does harm to himself, as by exaggerating in one direction, he fatally does so in all others. The bragging of certain Greeks was the cause of About's *La Grèce Contemporaine*.

The above considerations are for those who were at times irritated by the sincerity of my criticisms. I think I have acquired some right to be frank, since I did not hesitate to speak out when times were hard.<sup>1</sup> I have then told what was Greece

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<sup>1</sup> I wrote in the *Petit Temps* of the 27th November, 1901, that my speaking in 1897 at the tomb of Victor Hugo, in the name of the Greek students, might have had some serious consequences for me. The *République* of Mr. Méline, in its issue of the 29th November, was astonished at my statement and was asking whether I was not imposing on the public. I will merely relate what actually happened under the ministry of Mr. Méline. On the 7th February, 1897, I gave a lecture on Crete; it happened to be the first public manifest in favour of Greece. The next day, *viz.*, on the 8th, Mr. A. Rambaud, the Minister of Public Instruction, called me by a telegram to his office and told me that

suffering through the faults of others. I will now say what she suffers through her own fault.

Sad events took place there. We can now, from the newspapers, get their true colour. They were atrocious. We feel certain that the authors of this civil war must have recovered themselves by this time and that all this must appear to them as a bad dream. The particulars specially of these events are characteristic. On the day of the great meeting, when these wretched individuals gathered themselves round the columns of the Olympian Jupiter, exasperation, fanaticism, fury were pervading their brains. A student made a speech and said that it was not sufficient to excommunicate the translators of the Gospels, but that all those who read such translations should also be included in such an excommunication and that the copies of these translations should, when found, be thrown into the fire. The Turks, he said, did not do by the sword as much harm to Greece as the pen and the book are doing to her during the present day.

It is stupefying to hear such things. Here is a country, which owes its very existence and glory to literature and which turns now against Thought and the Book! What a profanation! Did not the wretch, who was uttering such imprudent words, in front of those eternal columns, remember Sophocles and was he

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he was obliged to speak to me; he said that I ought to stop the agitation my lecture provoked and that he expected me to think over the matter and conform myself to his wishes. I took the liberty to reply, in a most amiable manner, to His Excellency, that I must be a very wrong headed person, since, although I did not actually intend to go on with my lecture, I felt it my duty to do the contrary, now, after this interview. I repeated my lecture at the *Bodinière* and gave three more at Caen, Reims, Versailles and also spoke at the tomb of Victor Hugo. This I did for Greece! and she will find me ever ready to recommence.

I never related this incident, except now, when I am compelled to do so, owing to the remarks of the above mentioned newspaper the *République*.

not afraid of Jupiter's enormous eye, which according to the poet is always wide awake?

"For from the heavens, where his august eye is always awake, Jupiter Morius, with the azure-eyed Minerva, watch him."

The watching of Zeus and the glances of the Glaucopis, however, have not stopped this delirious crowd. They pretended they were roused in the name of a national principle and still the sight of the soldiers and the marines, who represented their country, was sufficient to make them see blood. Everybody admits that the troops behaved admirably. They fired blank, they preferred to die rather than to kill their countrymen. This is true to the letter since many soldiers were killed. From accounts of the events it is clear that the rioters began first the attack. They were seized with a blood thirsty frenzy each time the troops wished to stop them from passing through the *cordon* they had formed. They meant to get loose and do as they pleased in the streets of the city. The day, on which Mr. Theotokis, the Prime Minister, assailed by bullets in his open carriage, had shown such a peaceful courage, an infuriated mob attacked his house as soon as he had entered it. Everything must be told. The weakness of the authorities was great. The Commissioner of the Police was arresting himself those of his policemen, who were accused by the mob of having fired at them. Although they handed to their chief their revolvers loaded, they were nevertheless suspected of murder. A giddiness, a madness, a terror carried away everybody, Ministers and Professors, the Metropolitan and the Saint Synod. Nobody dared to go against the feelings of the masses. A good deal of consideration to the students was shown by those, who talked to them, and many precautions were used in dealing with them. After the troubles were over, Mr. Theotokis himself has acknowledged, in an interview, that the more kindness was shown to the insurgents the more they became exacting and ferocious. The greatest responsibility lies with the Press. The Athenian newspapers were pouring oil on the fire in a manner.

approaching epilepsy. They were publishing articles with such headings as "Burn them alive"!! Some mentioned that a "Saint Barthelemy" was necessary. Frenzy, rage, foaming, hatred, abomination was the order of the day. We have seen elsewhere also such a hideous prose. Let us brand it without pity, wherever we come across it.

But why may it be asked all this fighting and all this fury? Why these vociferous excommunications, this fall of the Ministry, these concessions, this resignation of the Metropolitan? why a whole dynasty threatened, a whole country throwing itself into a whirlpool? It is difficult to explain matters to Europe. Public opinion was in a way led astray. These riots were attributed to a religious motive. This, however, is but a side issue. It was attributed by some to a movement against Panslavism; this, however, was but an after thought. The English Press, notwithstanding the excellent articles it published, was mistaken on more than one occasion. The *Times* has seriously thought of a movement against the Slavs. The misunderstanding in England was due to a letter signed by "*A Greek student of the New Testament*" and published in the *Daily News*, a most philhellenic paper and full of broad liberalism. The *Greek student* did not hesitate to congratulate the Greek students on their doings and represented them as being Anti-Russian. This naturally pleased the English. In France our friend Quillard<sup>1</sup> has been taken in. Some newspapers saw in these riots something similar to a clerical movement and encouraged it. The *Temps*, generally so well informed as regards what happens in foreign countries, had, by the side of masterly leaders by F. de Pressensé, published some rather childish correspondences from Athens, which, however, owing to their very exaggerations could not be taken seriously. We must state this at once: the reason of the riots is not the translation of the Gospel, but the translation of the Gospel into Vulgar

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<sup>1</sup> A distinguished French author, poet and journalist. N.T.

Greek. This is the main point. Let us try to examine it thoroughly. All the rest is but of a minor consideration.

## II.

To begin with, what is Vulgar Greek? Vulgar Greek is purely and simply ancient Greek itself transformed, according to well known laws, through a hundredfold secular evolution; consequently it is Modern Greek. All this would have been alright, if all Greeks saw it in this light. But the *Purists* do not do so and for them *Vulgar* Greek is not the outcome of a natural evolution—the idea of evolution is still inaccessible to the great majority in Greece—but the result of an abominable *corruption*. Consequently, Modern Greek is a barbarous Greek, a *patois*, a shame. It is easy to follow this reasoning: if it is a *corrupt* Greek, how could it be but owing to a past of misery, humiliation, servitude and a mixing of races? Then the Greeks would no more be the descendants of Pericles? Not a nation? Nothing at all? The Greek *savants*, in endeavouring by a vigorous effort—and what an amount of splendid energy has been wasted in such an effort!—to resuscitate classical Greek, had to wipe off the slightest traces of what they considered to be a dishonourable corruption. Twenty years ago *atticism* was reigning supreme in Athens. The purest attic was used. By and by, however, there came some relaxation. A mixed language has been adopted, which partakes of everything, *viz.*, of classical, modern and byzantine Greek, of gallicisms, anglicisms, with a predominance of a certain macaronic Greek, which dates from the middle ages. It is really hideous. The words, however, taken one by one, have an antique *colouring*, that is to say, they preserve the ancient spelling. This saves the situation and is reassuring as regards the descent from Pericles.

Do not let us, however, ridicule too much such efforts. Even in such a prejudice there is a noble race instinct, a fine and generous idealism. The aim is excellent, although the means

employed are detestable. Because, after all, the irrefutable and authentic proof of the direct descent of Modern Greeks from the ancient, the tie the most indestructible between Greece of the past and Greece of the present, the glorious chain uniting the two, can only be found in *Vulgar* Greek, which is the uninterrupted continuation of the ancient; it is, therefore, this Greek that deserves the enthusiasm and the worship of the people. It is quite evident that an artificial language, made up from books, means nothing. Still prejudice is so powerful that it ends by making people blind. They no more see that the Purist Greek is a sad parody of Demosthenes' beautiful language. On the other hand, we must confess that classical Greek is more worshipped than known. Being so distant and so ancient it has become merely a fétich. The accusations, brought forward by the Purists against the authors, who employ *Vulgar* Greek in their prose, show how little the very essence of ancient Greek is understood, how its beauty is ignored. To use their own arguments, the Greeks, who entertain such ideas, only prove themselves to be unworthy descendants of Pericles. They have three chief grievances and each of them shows how insufficient is their classical culture in its broadest and truest sense. They reproach to the works in vulgar—or modern—prose to be “a mixture of corrupted Greek words taken from the “various dialects, with a heavy percentage of Turkish or Italian “words and of words concocted artificially and arbitrarily by their “authors.” Still, Homer—and after him Dante—mix local dialects and even local grammars. Homer—and many others, have words of foreign and even semitic derivation. Plato employs as Greek foreign words and sees no harm in doing so. Lastly, Thucydides—and in fact we can say every author, every artist—concocts new words, skilfully cast in the popular moulds. Notwithstanding this, the Purists talk of ancient models. Without understanding their spirit and giving free vent to such prejudices, they brand that admirable language—Modern Greek—with such names as barbarous and grotesque.

Let us bear well in mind this last word, as it will help us to

understand why the translation of a sacred text in a *grotesque* language was considered as an abominable profanation. It is quite certain that, if Modern Greek had a right of citizenship, if its nobiliary titles were admitted, the riots, which occurred lately, would never have taken place.

In Greece, as it might have been expected, the interested parties have denied that the cause of the riots was due to the anti-vulgarist prejudice. They brought forward chiefly the religious pretext, the attack on the national creed. A religious war always looks far grander than a mere squabble over words. In this case, however, it is not over words that the vulgarists fight; their object is much higher, for its aims at disentangling the soul of a whole nation from the deadly ties with which it is bound up. An expression must be given to this soul. But the Purists think that they would give too much importance to a cause they despise, were they to admit that the public is so much interested in the question. They prefer to veil facts with that art of insinuating and specially of omitting chief points, which can only be understood by a Greek when he reads another Greek. The *Greek Student* does not even mention in his article Mr. Pallis who is the author of the anathematized translation. Some have acknowledged that Pallis and his translation had something to do with these events; but they say that this was only a spark in the anti-Slav feeling; which is always brewing in Greece. This naturally does more honour to the party of Purists. For, what figure would they cut before the world, if it became known that the only arms they can use against vulgarists is rioting and bloodshed? The verdict on such an assumption would not be long to come. It is well known in Greece what learned Europe, the Europe which is qualified to express an opinion on such a subject, thinks of purism. In a recent article of the *Times* (11th December, 1901), Mr. Walter Leaf, the famous hellenist, called the language of these gentlemen, "a strange bastard jargon, capable of setting a linguist's teeth on edge." Mr. Rouse, the well-known professor of Rugby, is none the least critical about this very "incredible

jargon" of the pedants (*Daily News*, 22nd November, 1901). Another newspaper says that this language is "neither flesh, fish, or fowl, nor even a good red herring." Is it really worth fighting for such a monster? Europe would open her eyes wide with astonishment.

And she has done so. And she still cannot, for several reasons, understand these events. First of all, because she can see nowhere similar linguistic fights. They belong to the past. If, at least, this fight were a duel between the beautiful classical Greek and the Greek of the Klephts of the mountains! but, no. It is only a question about purist Greek, which is neither the one nor the other. Is not this enough to make one's hair stand on end? The arguments of the vulgarists and simple common sense are, on the other hand, so clear and forcible, that one is apt to ask "how is it that everybody in Greece has not as yet been convinced by them"? Some hellenists admit that the subject might still be liable to discussion and worth of some floods of ink. But of floods of blood! This logically and psychologically looks to them as an utter impossibility.

This, however, is due to the fact that hellenists know Greece only from the outside. This language may be called Purism, jargon, fowl or red herring if you like, but the Greek *savants* considered and meant to consider this hybrid monster as one of the holiest temples of Greece. They look upon Purism as the faithful guardian of the ancestral worship and as the symbol of the nation's faith. For this twofold treasure Greece has always fought. It is no use arguing that the Gospels were written in a language, which, when compared to that of Plato, is certainly a *degenerate* language, which at its time was the *vulgar* tongue, and that, consequently, it is hardly reasonable to forbid the version of it in the *vulgar* tongue of to-day. It is no use demonstrating that Purism is the hardest obstacle to the intellectual and moral resurrection of the country, to the production of works or masterpieces written in a tongue as living as that of the ancient masterpieces, and which would some day become equally beautiful. For how can one reason against passion? there lies the key



to the whole mystery ; the irreducible passion of some. Some excellent Parisian friends, although favourable, in a general way, to vulgarism, still take exception to what they consider as being somewhat of an exaggeration and as going to extremes. Such an objection is rather *naïve*, when we consider the last events. It proves, particularly, how difficult it is, in the West, to realize what an excess is Purism itself ; I mean by this the fanaticism, the fury, the blind rage of its adepts, in one word, the disease that it actually is. We must understand that it is like madness with some of its worst characteristics. It is true, that to understand all this, one must know Greece well, one must understand that the Greek, who, generally, is wrongly represented as loquacious and effusive, gives hardly himself away and, under the most calm appearances, collects his passions within himself. I have myself had some experience of these obstinate angers. Unless we admit the latter as being the origin of the recent troubles, we shall never understand the character of this movement, which has been essentially an anti-vulgarist one. As, however, there might still be some doubts about this, both in Greece and in Europe, we will, once for all, bring forward the proofs of our assertion.

The first intervention of ecclesiastical authority in the discussion emanated from the Patriarch of Constantinople, the Head of the Orthodox Church. He addressed a letter on the subject to the Saint Synod of Greece. In this letter, the Patriarch deals *exclusively* with the principle of the vulgarists ; he brands them harshly and considers that they disgrace, in an abject language, the beauties of the Gospel. He does not say a word about translations in general. We may here add that the Patriarch Joachim III is well-known for his slavophil sentiments and that in 1877 he was awaiting passionately the Russians, encamped in San-Stefano, in order to celebrate the mass at Saint-Sophia.

What, however, is most interesting to know in this affair is that the signal against the translation of the Gospels, was not given by the Patriarchate, who only brandished its thunders, after being closely pressed by a Constantinopolitan newspaper, the

*Takhydromos*. I related in the *Sidèle* of 25th November, 1901, the personal reasons, which induced this paper to adopt such a policy. There are others besides. It is a newspaper most uncompromising and ferocious as far as Purism in the language is concerned. Here we must state that our linguistic ideas are far less advanced in Constantinople than in Greece itself. As, for some time past, vulgarism was going ahead, with all sails set to discover a new world, it was necessary to stop it. The article provoking this agitation appeared on the 26th September, 1901, It began by an anathema against vulgarism. Like the Patriarch himself, it does not deal with the translations of the Gospel in general, but only with the *translation* in *Vulgar Greek*.

The Athenian newspapers have followed suit; the Purist newspapers I mean. On the contrary, the newspapers, which fell victims of the first aggressions, were the *Acropolis*, which was publishing this translation, and the *Astý*, which up to that time, had supported the good cause.

What, however, is more conclusive in all this affair is that, when the troubles began at first, the Professors of the Theological Section of the Athenian University assembled and declared officially and solemnly that they condemn all translations. Before the troubles, they were so much in favour of the principle of translations, that one of them had already made one and another had strongly supported the idea. These translations, however, were in Purist Greek and there was amongst them one, which was made by a Patriarch. We cannot but admire here the subtleness with which such points of view are altered according to circumstances; we have already explained what Purism is, and it ought to be quite clear to all right-thinking persons that the real profanation of the Gospel would be in translating it into such a hybrid Greek. Quite the contrary has happened however. The vulgar translation has been branded and considered profane. It is demonstrated and shouted all over Greece that it is illegal to translate, to deform the holy text. The vulgarists plead that other translations have been made before the incriminated one, as, for

instance, the one undertaken under the patronage of the Queen of Greece herself. True, reply the Purists, but such translations have passed unnoticed and are forgotten by this time. In order to condemn this vulgar translation, all translators have been included in the condemnation. The Professor, who has himself translated the Gospel, did not hesitate to express his opinion that he is against all translations. All this is aimed against vulgar Greek. Never, before, the Purist translations, although widely circulated, had roused public opinion and this alone suffices to prove the correctness of our assertion. We must not forget that the constant cry of the rioters and of the hostile newspapers was invariably the same; the word "profanation" comes up on all occasions; and what does it mean? It means that the Gospel has been desecrated, that it becomes abject in such a tongue. In his incredible speech before the grave of the victims, Mr. Levidis<sup>1</sup> congratulates the rioters for having fought for their country, their *language*, their religion. Religion, as you see, comes second. Mr. Levidis was expressing correctly the feelings of the university youths. The language question comprises everything, country, religion, the whole national heirloom.

Owing to all this, the Saint Synod found themselves peculiarly situated, when they had to satisfy the demands of the students; in other words, when they were asked to excommunicate the translators. To shout, to break windows, to rise in mutiny, to kill, this is all very well. But the dogma? Would it allow them to excommunicate? If it happened that this despised and hateful translation, which was considered vulgar and profane, was all the same a true translation? Then—horrible to think—to excommunicate the translation would mean, purely and simply, to excommunicate the Gospel, the Evangelists, Jesus Christ himself.

We have here to mark another point. The riots were instigated by the students, who, from morning to night, are plunged into Purism. They disdain the vulgar translations and ruminate

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<sup>1</sup> An athenian political man. N.T.

the same old prejudices. They read very little. Ignorant and superficial they hang on a few words. In fact there was no squabble over the whole translation of the Gospels, but over a *few words* in it. Mr. Pallis, in order to render into Modern Greek the terms of *Ass* and *Mount of Olives*, has created new words on the model of the popular forms. This appeared monstrous. In all this dispute, such words were held up to the thunders of the Church. Most of the combatants walked in the name of these two words. It is always the same old story in this great linguistic discussion; the Purists only looked to two or three words. It is unfortunate that the words used by Mr. Pallis meant exactly what was conveyed by the Holy Text. What was then to be done? In fact, the Saint Synod, far from being in a position to excommunicate the translation, cannot even condemn it, because such a decision would include translations made formerly by Patriarchs. They cannot either forbid any further translations; for such a step would mean that they reverse their own judgments. They have, therefore, taken a half measure; they forbade the *use* of translations and condemned not the fact of translating but that of altering and of modifying the sacred texts by means of a translation. It is astonishing that the Divinity undergraduates have not felt, from the very beginning, the difficult position into which they were driving the theologists.

Such a decision has roused the students against the Ecclesiastical authorities, against the Church, which they pretended to defend. At this moment, the Anti-Slav passions became acutely violent. But it is a mistake to think that the translation patronized by the Queen, a Russian Princess, was the sole motive of the explosion. Certainly, the behaviour of the rioters against this irreproachable woman was scandalous. The same accusation was already hurled against Mr. Pallis. It is as empty as the rest of it. The motive, as everything else, was an anti-vulgarist one.

The Purists evidently imagine that the following conversation would take place in Macedonia between a Greek peasant and a Slav. "I alone," would say the Greek, "I am in possession of

"the Gospel in the original, which is my mother-tongue. I am, therefore, superior to you and Macedonia belongs to me."—The Purists think that had the Greek produced a translation, he would have come down to the level of the Slav. What a strange reasoning this is! The Slav, if he be only a little coached by his party, would reply to the Greek: "Do you really possess the Gospel in the original? Will you then explain to me its contents?" One of the following two things will happen: either the Greek understands the ancient text and explains it and thus he commits the crime of translating it; or he does not understand it—which is the most frequent case—and the Slav then retorts: "I have only a translation of it, but at least I can read it. You may possess the original, but you do not understand a word of it. I am, therefore, superior to you, and Macedonia is mine."

Up to this, a translation of the Gospel was never considered as endangering Greek ambitions in Macedonia. This was due to the fact that, up to this, only Purist translations were being circulated; and we know that the Purist tongue is the sacred depository of Hellenic traditions. Between this tongue and that of the Gospel the distinction was not quite clear; whilst a translation in the idiom, which Purism qualifies as a foreign tongue, is really a translation.

Pallis's translation was necessary in order to show that the other translations could not be considered as such. Here we meet once more the hatred of vulgarism, the chief cause of all this agitation. The Slavs, alas!, little care about grammatical squabbles. The Slav, whom the Purists want to conquer, considers language as a commodity. The Greek people, on the other hand, want a language, which they can understand and speak. Vulgarism, besides its literary breath and its poetry, aims at a practical end and such an end is a high one. The narrow pedantism of the Purists precludes all national education from becoming serious and fertile; it prevents the ideas, nay, its very own words, from spreading about, as they cannot be easily retained by the people,

being so foreign to them. The result of all this is that the people impair their own tongue and subsequently their own soul at the contamination of this hybrid tongue. Purism is bound to capsize, when all its defects will become palpable. At this present day the interdiction, which hangs on all the translations of the Gospel, will be a great blow to Greek Christianity, since the Gospel will be read no more, or, if read, will be badly understood. Even in Greece itself, some clear headed minds judge this question in this light. In such scholastic fights, Greece will lose something more than Macedonia; as we have often said, she runs the risk of entirely ruining herself.

### III.

We must not, however, despair of this magnificent country, of which I would prefer to enumerate the beauties rather than the blemishes. The Greeks, so well adapted for high thoughts, possessing such a proud idealism, are at the same time full of common sense. If they forgot themselves this time, they only did so as they were carried away by the fanaticism of the Purists. They will recover themselves in time. The nature, surrounding their country, sweetly advises them to have courage, meditation and hope. The day the victims were buried, a striking scene, we are told, was taking place in the sky of Athens. The cemetery was pervaded by an immense crowd. After a stormy day, a bloody sun was disappearing behind the immortal hills of the city. A sinister darkness was soon going to spread all over the town. But no! The sun had not as yet set, when, by one of those contrasts, so frequent in the Greek horizon, the enormous disc of the moon rose resplendant on the opposite side. The two lights were dazzling the holy people. The sun was disappearing, leaving darkness to cover the crimes of the day, but the moon was brightening up everything with her miraculous light. She was telling the sweet life of the heart, she was making people collect themselves, she was filling them with calmness and soft dreaming; she was evoking imperishably the souls of the dead, the remem-

brance of whom fills the eyes with tears. The moon was gilding the Parthenon. She was reminding the people of their ancestral glory by the peaceful feelings she was bringing to them, by the caresses of her soft rays, by the hopes she was giving them of a resurrection, which the new sun of the morrow would announce unto them.

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# A glance on Vulgar or Modern Greek Literature.

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By J. N. PSICHARI.

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(N.B.—*The following appeared in the Journal de Genève of the 7th January, 1902.*)

On the occasion of the recent riots in Athens a good deal has been said about purist and *vulgar* Greek. These grammatical squabbles, which are apt at times to become acrimonious, do no longer afford amusement to anybody. It would be far more interesting to find out which works in Modern Greek literature are worth the attention of other peoples. This article gives only a cursory glance of the question, but we believe it to be instructive; some—in Greece of course—pretend that vulgar Greek is mere “gibberish”; this is their favourite expression. Others say that the vulgarists are merely a voice lost in the desert, that some wretched persons have been “led astray by a sort of fascination,” but that such isolated cases count for nothing and that, besides, even in Greece, the efforts of the vulgarists are not worth of the slightest consideration. Let us see if this is so. That *vulgar* Greek is the regular, normal and historical development of ancient Greek, is a point, which science has now-a-days proved to be undoubted. We shall not, therefore, insist in proving its correctness, but shall simply review those *wretched isolated* persons, who endeavoured to make of this so despised vulgar Greek a written language.

Modern Greek literature is not, in the true sense of the word, of quite a recent date. Without going as far back as the Middle



Ages, where amongst an abominable "farrago," entirely devoid of any literary merit and precious to the linguist alone, we find some productions fairly vivid, concise, and even elegant, we cannot but pause for a moment at the XVI Century. The *Erotocritos* is a celebrated poem, which is still being read by the people up to the present day and which by its picturesqueness, the exquisite simplicity of its style, its vivid and well-sustained fabulation, is certainly a literary work of a high standard. Still it is not the best of its time; the gem of Grecian poetry is a Cretan *mystery* published in 1535, *Abraham's Sacrifice*, which would be worth of a special study. We shall only state here that it contains, in the highest degree, that force and delicateness of psychological analysis, which, later on, will distinguish modern works.

I must, however, confess that *Abraham's Sacrifice* does not enjoy much consideration in Greece, since it is almost unknown there. The fault does not certainly lie with its unknown author, who was as modest as some of his countrymen, the anonymous comedies or dramas of whom have been handed down to us. At the beginning of the XVII Century there was in Crete a real theatrical renaissance; Chortatzi's *Erophile* occupies the first place in this cycle; it is gracious and terrible, idyllic and tender in its darkest tragical parts; inspired, like *Erotocritos*, from an Italian work, it has likewise been preferred by competent critics to the original. Since we are in Crete and in the XVII Century, we should not omit the "*Beautiful Shepherdess*" of Drimycticos, which is purely original. Space, however, does not allow us to ponder over it: it is a rare gem, not resembling to the psychology of any other people; it is light in touch, deep in feeling, simply and purely charming.

Crete was conquered in 1669 by the Turks, and then its literary growth stopped all of a sudden. But the Greek people did not remain silent; their songs were heard all over Greece. Under the hardest of all yokes, under the most barbarous master, the soul of their people was expanding under poetry's

breath. From those times hail the admirable popular poems, which, first collected by Fauriel, have since been edited several times, but which are still imperfectly known, because we have not as yet any work giving us in its entirety all that is revealed by them about the thoughts and the heart of a whole nation ; a particular conception of life and its secular bequests ; a metaphysic creating a whole after-life ; a new vision of the universe ; a variety of the most noble and the most human feelings ; an unconquerable cult of freedom ; torrid passions or love as fresh as a rose, jealousy, resignation, tenderness, pity, wrath, ambition, envy, touchy or fierce temper, an uninterrupted display of pictures sparkling with life, of a perfect composition and couched in an impulsive language ; a world in themselves. They are like an anonymous Dante with thousand voices and thousand souls.

And not only have the Greeks songs, but also tales in prose. Some of them are of a fierce and primitive beauty ; marvellous, not so much by the plot itself, as by the magic gift which their authors have for animating, without effort but as if it were in ordinary conversation, even the most familiar, the most ordinary objects of the house, such as the floor, the doors, the windows, which thus become the characters of the great drama that is played between forests and men blended together. In such an idealistic realism there is a supreme touch of nobleness. Songs and tales are the best productions of literary Greece of to-day.

From such a double current, verse and prose, our modern literature is derived. We will first mention the poets, since they are the first comers. Greece has two at least, of whom she might well be proud. Valaority, who was, as a citizen, such a fine character, and who, as a poet, endeavoured to collect from the people of the villages the least known, the most neglected, and sometimes the most obscure words, in order to transfuse them in his magnificent and terrible compositions ; the most celebrated of these is *Dame Frosyne*, where, in an historical frame—the action takes place at Janina, at the time of Ali Pacha—we have a fine analysis of characters and a broad study of souls. The other poet is Solomos.

Although of Italian extraction and brought up in his youth in Italy, he is so imbued with the Greek spirit, that some of his poems became popular and figure as belonging to the Folklore, in Passow's *Carmina Popularia Graeciae recentioris*! We at once recognize in Solomos the thorough-bred poet by certain magnificent verses, all of a flash, which we either find at the beginning of a poem, or only possess in fragments, for the poet, discouraged by a public unable to understand him, disdained to finish his later works. He was a great enemy of the purists, who made him pay dearly for his contempt. He is the author of the *Hymn to Liberty*, which, at the Philellic times, had a considerable resounding in Europe. Let us note here that Solomos considered the intellectual emancipation of Greece, *viz.*, the definite breaking up of all the ties with which the learned tongue had entangled her, as important to her as her political independence.

Vilaras, who had at times the intuition of a genius, Zalamastas, in those of his poems which are still read, and many others are all *vulgarist* poets. The cause is won on the side of poetry and nobody at the present day would dream of writing poetry in the purist tongue. Scutzo, who was at a time the head of the purist poets, is no longer read and the few verses of his, which have survived, are only quoted jokingly now-a-days. Here is a curious fact. Mr. Angelos Vlachos, a militant purist, has made charming translations in the most vulgar Greek of some *lieds* of Heine. Naturally, the new school of poets employs none but the vulgar tongue.

To analyze all these poets would take too long; if we had the space, we would bring out the physiognomy of each. We shall, therefore, only mention here their names: Argyre Epthaliete (Mr. Michaelides), Vassilikos, Gryparis, Drossini, Cambouroglou, Markoras, Mardzokis, Melissioti, Palamas, Stephanou, Christovassili, Porphyras, Malakassis, Vlachoyannis, etc., etc. Some of them are quite famous in Greece and all either are convinced vulgarists or employ the vulgar tongue in their verses.

Under such conditions it was certain that for prose also the time of emancipation, as understood by Solomos, could not have failed to come. Names abound.<sup>1</sup> Let us take first the tale or short story. Here and there we find some written in purist Greek which certainly are not devoid of some merit. Such are those of Mr. Axiotis, who has since been converted to vulgarism. We have also Mr. Bikelas's short stories, which are, without doubt, superior by their vividness to his well-known novel, *Loukis Iaras*. But such works are at present almost out of date and we can assert, without fear of being contradicted, that the master works are to be found amongst those of the vulgarists. Let us mention first "*The Death of the Pallikare*" of Mr. Palamas, where, under the most aesthetic of fictions and in a drama full of life, one of the most ancient and persisting yearnings of Hellenism is clearly defined, *viz.*, the cult of perfect beauty. Mr. Palamas has in this work made a hit such as writers of note make only once in their life. They may do better sometimes, but never as well.

The work of Carcavitsa, whose first writings are in the purist tongue—we have such contrasts in times of struggle and transition—is already considerable and is widely read at the present day in Greece. The author listens to and re-produces the language of the most humble, that of mendicants and seafaring men. He possesses above all the sense of things marine; in his pages we inhale the salted breeze, we see the *fauna* and *flora* of the *Ægean* sea thriving and blossoming; polypi shiver, monstrous fish hit the rocks, and human dramas amongst divers take place in those abysses, frightful but always blue. But none equals Mr. Michaelides in condensing, like a flash of lightning, a whole passion, a whole existence, as he does in his swift, sparkling, perfect "*Stories of the Islands*." How many more have we to mention who would deserve an analysis! For instance, the author of "*Local Stories*," where, under the sometimes unhappy influence

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<sup>1</sup> For reasons, which we can well understand, Mr. Psichari omits here to mention his own works in Modern Greek. A brief mention of them is made in the preface of this work. See also Appendix B. N.T.

of Maupassant, we find such a deal of Romaic ardour and so many wild flowers of the Grecian soil! Mr. Christovassili, who hails from Souli, has confined himself to his mountains and vales. In his pastoral or heroic stories there is a sweet and strong perfume reminding us of Tourgueneff. Mr. Vlachoyanni, a solid and robust writer, knows at times how to add historical views to his investigations about the soul of the people. To sum up, a literary competition, which was instituted a year ago, gave results, some of which are most precious. There are numerous talents in Greece, which are ready to blossom at the smallest passing breath of air.

On the contrary, the purist language appears to become barren the moment it deals with works of imagination, *viz.*, with pure literature. Let those who differ give us examples, which, however, should not be mere lists, but should contain appreciations justifying the mention of such works. I do not forget the success obtained, chiefly owing to patriotic reasons, in 1893, by a drama of Mr. Vernardaki "*Fausta*," which placed Constantine the Great on the stage. I doubt whether this work could stand before another public, not on the stage, where it would be impossible, but even as a book. It would be an interesting experiment to try. Besides, it is on the stage that one must be well understood, when talking, and surely that place is hardly appropriate for the use of the purist tongue. Amongst purist novels we might mention Mrs. C. Parren's book, "*The Emancipated*," in which pretty details and some well-drawn characters are to be found. We must, however, admit that the thesis of the novel, *viz.*, "Woman's Rights," has nothing Greek in itself. It is as little *genuine* as the language it is written in.

It would, however, be a mistake to think that Mrs. Parren and so many others, like N. Episcopopulo, G. Xenopulo, G. Drossini, who use purist or rather mixed Greek—which is quite a different thing—are hostile to the vulgarists. They are, on the contrary, often passionate admirers of them and are entirely devoted to our cause. Many of them deplore having learned too

much purist Greek at school. In fact, there is hardly any Greek writer, even M. Ch. Anninos, whose plays are full of vulgarisms, who throws the anathema on the vulgarists. This is a curious fact, and we consider it necessary to insist on it, because public opinion has been misled on that point.

The book, however, which is most reputed and which is unanimously considered as the most elegant and best written in purist Greek, is Mr. Roidis' "*Idols*." Strange to say the author, by well condensed and subtle arguments, proceeds to completely demolish purism; "*Idols*" are the scholastic prejudices. One of the latest prejudices consists in contending that the vulgar tongue, although good perhaps for poetry and literature, is not fit for serious subjects. Still, Mr. Pallis, who has a genius as a translator, managed to give us a translation of crystalline clearness of an English astronomy. Mr. Marchetti, in a language in which we feel, as Pascal would say, that there is nothing too much and nothing too little, has translated, from the English also, a small treatise on political economy and managed to give to his Greek all the concision and the logic of the original. Mr. Michaelides has written a volume of over 300 pages about the Byzantine period of the Greek History. It is a real historical book, whilst we have been told that it is impossible to write history in vulgar Greek. I know quite well the reproach purists make to these writers. They accuse them of concocting words! Such an accusation is really puerile. On the contrary, they are worthy of praise, for who is the artist who does not create words? Did not Thucydides, the grave historian, create words when he was in need of them? And what does the fact of modern authors creating new words mean but that the language is at once pliable and rich?

The assertions of the purists are really incomprehensible, and we find them involved in a chaos of contradictions. The Greek people are accused of having an abject and corrupt language, and such an accusation is certainly not very honourable to them. But the case becomes more aggravating, when we find that the purists

themselves speak this very language. The state of a country, in which the language is so peculiarly situated, must no doubt be abnormal. Science establishes that the true jargon is the *purist* language and a good demonstration, ever true, of this has been given by Mr. Rouse<sup>1</sup> (of Rugby) in the *Times* of the 28th December last; science proves, on the contrary, that the so-called *abject* Greek is the normal Greek. This ought to satisfy the pedants, since thereby they are re-habilitated and the nation saved. Nevertheless, they continue at all costs to attach to such a language the blame of corruption. Verily, for the sake of a vain prejudice, for the love of an impossible Greek, and it is such—in all the sense of the word—they prefer to declare Greece barbarous. It really comes to idolizing corruption.

Let us put aside all such aimless theories. According to the purists, vulgarists are isolated lunatics. We have placed on their correct basis all such assertions, which at times have become boisterous and which pretended to represent the purist tendency as general and irresistible. Nothing of the sort is correct and if, as it has been said, to fight against such a tendency is to soliloquize, we may say that such a soliloquy lasts from the XVI Century and threatens to become a general conversation. We know very well that books on history, on medicine, on anatomy, on law, on philology, on the science of language, etc., are being written in purist Greek. The names of Paparhigopulo, Coray, and of many others are not unknown to us. Besides, even in that domain, we must not forget that "*Kolocotroni's Memoirs*" are written in the vulgar rather than in the purist tongue. But here we do not deal either with history or with philology. We speak of literature proper. Facts establish that the vulgar tongue constitutes the literary treasures of modern Greece. Wrath and shouting will do no good. Only works count and such works are daily produced. As Zola told us not long ago, the essential is that the book should exist, for it is the book that acts and lasts for ever.

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<sup>1</sup> See also Mr. Walter Leaf's excellent article in the *Times* of 11th December 1901. N.T.

## **Appendices.**





## Appendix A.

### LIST OF SOME ARTICLES IN THE ENGLISH AND ANGLO-INDIAN NEWSPAPERS ABOUT THE ATHENIAN GOSPEL RIOTS.

THE following is a list of some of the articles, which were published in the English and Anglo-Indian Press, on the occasion of the Gospel riots, which occurred in Athens in November 1901. It was kindly drawn up for this book by a valuable friend of ours. Those marked "for" justified the riots and were against the *vulgarists*. Those marked "against" entertained a contrary opinion.

*London Daily News*.—

1. 22nd November 1901.—Letter by a Greek Student of the New Testament (for).

Letter by W. H. D. Rouse (against).

*N.B.*—In a leader, published in the same number, the *Daily News* say that they do not know who is right, but that, in such a question, they are inclined to agree with the Greek.

2. 25th November 1901.—Paris Correspondence (against).
3. 26th November 1901.—Interview of their Paris Correspondent with Mr. Psichari.
4. 28th November 1901.—Letter by another Greek Student of the New Testament (against).
5. 30th November 1901.—A reply to the above by J. Gennadius (for)

*London Times*.—

1. 11th December 1901.—A letter by Walter Leaf (against).
2. 25th December 1901.—A letter by G. F. Abbott (for).
3. 28th December 1901.—A reply by W. H. D. Rouse (against) to G. F. Abbott.
4. 10th January 1902.—A letter by J. Gennadius (for).  
Letters by Walter Leaf (against) and J. N. Psichari (against).
5. 25th January 1902.—A letter by G. F. Abbott (for).

*Manchester Guardian*.—

1. 13th January 1902.—A leader (against).
2. 28th January 1902.—A letter by J. Gennadius (for).
3. 3rd February 1902.—A reply by Simplex to the above (against).

4. 4th February 1902.—A reply by J. N. Psichari to J. Gennadius (against).
5. 7th February 1902.—A letter by Lady Teacher (against).
6. 18th February 1902.—Letters by J. Gennadius and Philhellene (for).
7. 21st February 1902.—Letter by W. H. D. Rouse (against).

*The Spectator*—

- 30th November 1901.—The meaning of the Athenian riots.—  
article (against).
- 11th. January 1902.—Letter by Mr. Pylarinos (for).
- 25th January 1902.—Letter by Simplex replying to the above  
(against).
- 22nd February 1902.—Letter by Mr. Pylarinos replying to the  
above (for).

*N.B.*—*The Spectator* having closed the discussion, no further letters were published on the subject.

*The Morning Leader*.—

- 25th November 1901.—An article (against).

*The Liverpool Daily Post*.—

- 30th November 1901.—A leader (against).

*The Pilot*.—

- 30th November 1901.—A leader (against).

*Literature*.—

1. 30th November 1901.—An article on the occasion of J. Psichari's article to the *Petit Temps*. A Modern Greek Iliad, article by W. H. D. Rouse (against).
2. 7th December 1901.—Articles by D. E. Hogarth and W. M. (for).
3. 14th December 1901.—A reply by W. H. D. Rouse to D. E. Hogarth (against).

*The Sind Gazette* (Karachi).—

- 10th December 1901.—A leader (against).

*The Bombay Gazette*.—

- 11th December 1901.—A leader (against).

*The Englishman* (Calcutta).—

- 11th December 1901.—A leader (against).

*The Pioneer* (Allahabad).—

- 18th December 1901.—A leader (against).
- 28th February 1902.—An article (against).

## Appendix B.

### A COMPLETE LIST OF MR. J. N. PSICHARI'S WORKS.

The following is a complete list of Mr. J. N. Psichari's works and of his principal articles :—

**Essais de grammaire historique néo-grecque.** Tome I, Paris, 1886.—Tome II, *Etudes sur la langue médiévale*, Paris, 1888, E. Leroux, 28 rue Bonaparte.

**Essai de phonétique néo-grecque.** Futur composé du grec moderne, *θὰ γράφω, θὰ γράψω*, Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 1884 (en dépôt chez E. Leroux). Doublets syntactiques, *ἔταρ, ἔταρτα*. Paris 1885.

**Le poème à Spanéas**, Paris, F. Vieweg, 67, rue Richelieu, 1886.

**Observations phonétiques et étymologiques** sur quelques phénomènes néo-grecs. Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 1888 (chez E. Leroux).

**Observations sur la langue littéraire moderne et le style de Solomos**, Paris, E. Leroux, 1888.

**Quelques observations sur la phonétique des patois et leur influence sur la langue commune**, Paris, E. Leroux, 1888.

**Introduction**, sous forme de Lettre, à la Grammaire de la langue grecque vulgaire de S. Portius, écrite en 1636 et rééditée avec un commentaire grammatical par M. W. Meyer, Paris, Vieweg, 1888.

**Le Miroir Importun.** Extrait d'un manuscrit inédit, contenant une *Histoire anecdotique et fabuleuse des empereurs de Byzance*. Ecriture xvi<sup>e</sup> siècle; Paris 1888; 4°, 4 pages (limited to 28 copies).

**Observations sur la prononciation ancienne et moderne du grec**, à propos du livre de M. Engel, *Revue critique*, Paris, 1887, No. 14 (du 1<sup>er</sup> Avril).—Coup d'œil sur le développement de la langue néo-grecque, *ibid.*, Déc., 1884, No. 49.—Koraïs et le grec moderne, *ibid.*, Mars, 1876, No. 10.—Les noms géographiques populaires, *ibid.*, Mai, 1887, No. 21.—L'aphérèse et les opinions linguistiques de M. Foy, *ibid.*, Avril, 1888, No. 17, Paris, E. Leroux, éditeur.—Compte rendu d'Hermoniacos II, *Revue critique*, Paris 1891, No. 2.—Rapport d'une mission en Grèce et en Orient. Paris 1890. 8° 11 pages.

**Les caractères de la langue médiévale**, réponse à un article de M. Chatzidakis, Berliner philol. Wochenschrift, Berlin, 1888, Nos. 17, 18, 20 (en allemand).

**Térence**. Les Adelphe, texte latin publié avec une introduction, des notes en français, les fragments des Adelphe de Ménandre, les imitations de Molière, etc. Paris. Hachette, 1881.

**La Ballade de Lénore en Grèce**, Paris, E. Leroux, 1884.

**La science et les destinées nouvelles de la poésie**. Paris, Nouvelle Revue, 1884.

Ιστορικά και Γλωσσολογικά Ζητήματα, Constantinople 1888.

Τὸ Ταξίδι μου. Athènes, S. K. Vlastos, 1888.

Τένειφο τοῦ Γιαννίρη. Athens, 1897.

**Etudes de Philologie Byzantine et Néo-Grecque**. Recherches sur le développement historique du Grec. Paris 1892 E. Leroux, 28, rue Bonaparte in 8, ccxii-377 pages.

Γὰ τὸ Ρωμαϊκὸ θέατρο. Ὁ Κυρόβλης (a drama) Ὁ Γουάρκος (a comedy). Paris 1901 H. Welter, 4, rue Bernard Palissy.

Ρόδα καὶ Μῆλα. Paris, 1902. H. Welter, 4, rue Bernard Palissy.

**Jalousie**. Paris, 1892, 94 pages (Tiré à cent exemplaires).

**Cadeau de noces**. Calmann Lévy, 1893 x-321 pages.

**Autour de la Grèce**. Calmann Lévy, 1897, xxiv-352 pages.

**Le Rêve de Yanniri**. Calmann Lévy, 1897, xvi-408 pages.

**La Croyante**, 1899, x-328 pages.

**L'E' preuve**, 1899, xiii (dédicace au colonel Picquart, tirée à vingt-cinq exemplaires), 255 pages.

**Le vers français et les poètes décadents**. *Revue Bleue*, 6 Juin 1891.—La Crète et la Turquie, *Revue Bleue*, 27 Février 1897.—La bataille littéraire en Grèce, *Revue de Paris* 1er Mars 1901.—Lettres inédites de Béranger, *Grande Revue* 1er Février 1901.—L' Iliade d' Homère, traduite en grec moderne et en vers par A. Pallis, *Revue Critique* 17 Juin 1901.—Histoire romaine par Michaélidès.—*Revue Critique* 9 Septembre 1901.—Byron à Missolonghi.—*La Contemporaine* 10 Avril 1901.—La Querelle des Evangiles en Grèce.—*La Revue* 1er Janvier 1902.—De Mitylène en Bretagne.—*Grande Revue* 1er Février 1902.

## Appendix C.

### ERRATA.

Owing to circumstances beyond our control and of which it would be idle to entertain the reader, the printing of this book was not done as carefully as we would have wished. Some of the principal mistakes are corrected here. The translation was made as literal as possible, as we thought it would, in this way, better preserve the flavour of the original ; and this may account for the rather exotic appearance of some of the sentences.

| Page  | line     |  | read when                     | for where                     |
|-------|----------|--|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| xiv   | 32       |  |                               |                               |
| xvii  | 7 (note) |  | and, very young, went over to | and, very young went over, to |
| xix   | 20       |  | Αιοχύλος                      | Αιοχύλος                      |
| xxvii | 23       |  | purest                        | purist                        |
| 6     | 12       |  | τὸ                            | τό                            |
| 6     | 3 (note) |  | Νησιώτικες                    | Νησιώτικες                    |
| 6     | 3 ( " )  |  | Ἀργύρης                       | Ἀργόρης                       |
| 7     | 15       |  | τίς                           | τις                           |
| 7     | 18       |  | παιδιά                        | παιδιά                        |
| 11    | 23       |  | Goethe                        | Geothe                        |
| 11    | (note)   |  | d'                            | d                             |
| 15    | 6        |  | διδάσκειν                     | διδάσκειν                     |
| 15    | 8        |  | οὗς                           | οὗς                           |
| 15    | 6        |  | an Hellenist                  | a Hellenist                   |
| 17    | 26       |  | forbendola                    | forbendolla                   |
| 23    | 9        |  | areas                         | arenas                        |
| 23    | 20       |  | et                            | el                            |
| 24    | 20       |  | ἀλεποῦ                        | ἀλεποῦ                        |
| 25    | 7        |  | Volkssprache.                 | Volkssprache                  |
| 25    | 11       |  | Université                    | Universi te'                  |

| Page | 27 | line | 15       | read | Eustathe                                                                                                                              | for | Enstat                  |
|------|----|------|----------|------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|-------------------------|
| "    | 29 | "    | 19       | "    | what a weapon                                                                                                                         | "   | what a                  |
| "    | 37 | "    | 3 (note) | "    | assouplit                                                                                                                             | "   | assoupi                 |
| "    | 38 | "    | 1 ( " )  | "    | Il                                                                                                                                    | "   | Se                      |
| "    | 39 | "    | 2 ( " )  | "    | dans                                                                                                                                  | "   | daus                    |
| "    | 39 | "    | 4        | "    | largely                                                                                                                               | "   | argely                  |
| "    | 44 | "    | 7 (note) | "    | words                                                                                                                                 | "   | word                    |
| "    | 45 | "    | 13       | "    | it                                                                                                                                    | "   | ir                      |
| "    | 49 | "    | 4        | "    | Revue                                                                                                                                 | "   | Reveu                   |
| "    | 56 | "    | 12       | "    | it                                                                                                                                    | "   | its                     |
| "    | 57 | "    | 17       | "    | worthy                                                                                                                                | "   | worth                   |
| "    | 61 | "    | 35       | "    | am                                                                                                                                    | "   | I am                    |
| "    | 78 | "    | 24       | "    | L' Épreuve                                                                                                                            | "   | L' E'prev               |
| "    | 78 | "    | 28       | "    | ler                                                                                                                                   | "   | let                     |
| "    | 78 | "    | 29       | "    | ler                                                                                                                                   | "   | ley                     |
| "    | 78 | "    | 28-29    | "    | B é r a n g e r -<br>Lettres à Ary<br>S c h e f f e r .<br>( <i>Notices histori-</i><br><i>ques par M.</i><br><i>Jean Psichari</i> ). | "   | Letres iné<br>de Bérang |





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